

Inside: President Shirley Strum Kenny Speaks-How an Israeli Marketed the Power Rangers-Q&A On Judaism

Shelanu

The University at Stony Brook Jewish Newspaper

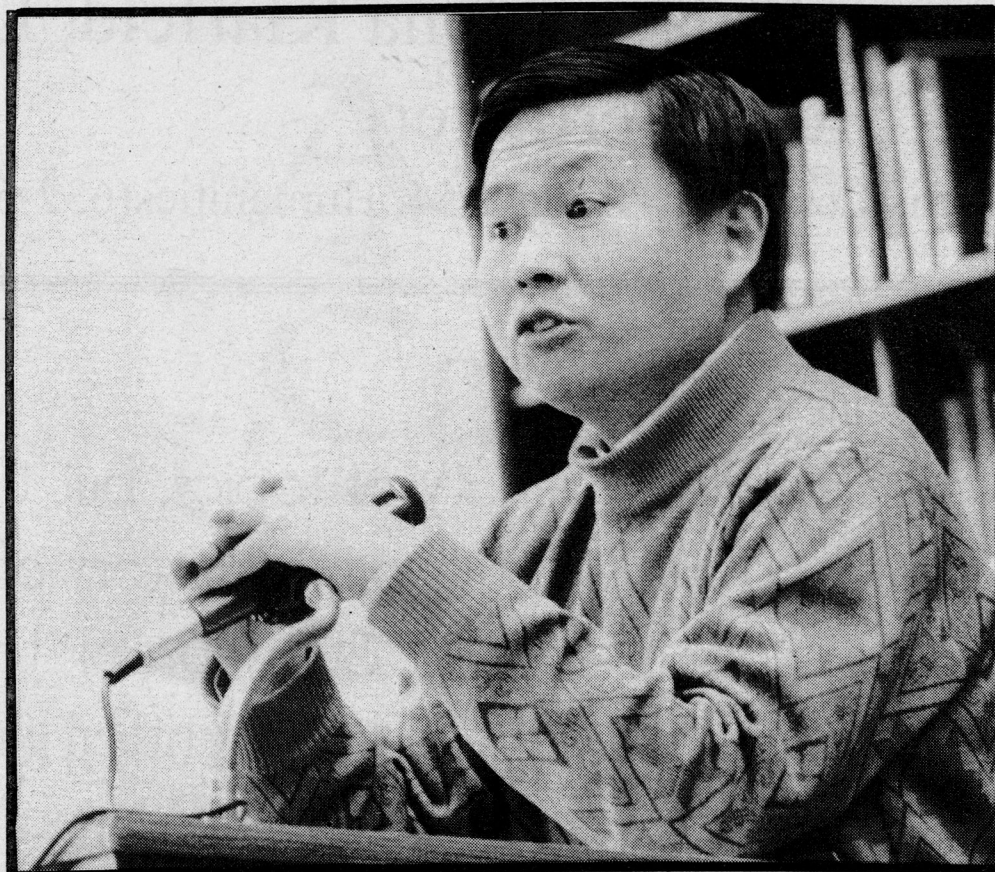


Photo by Bill Bennett

Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing University

Professor From Nanjing Speaks on the History of the Jews in China

Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing University spoke on the history of Jews in China on April 13th at SBU. Xu spoke specifically about a Jewish colony in China, the Kaifeng community.

Some people question whether there was a Jewish diaspora in China, Xu explained: "People need something to prove it. In the Bible in chapter 49: 12 there is an ancient city called Sinni. Sinni, in Hebrew means China today. However, some scholars question whether some Jews went to China then."

Scholars believe they were in China in the Nomadic period: "We have substantial evidence there were Arab merchants from Persia who came to China from the Mideast. And if there were Arab merchants, and merchant traders, why not Jews, because at that time Jews were already in that area."

The earliest concrete evidence of Jews was a business letter written on Chinese paper (the only country that made paper at the time was China) which was written in Judeo-Persian in the eighth century. Between the sixth and thirteenth century there were Jews in almost all the major cities in

China. However, the chief community that left evidence of its existence was in Kaifeng. Kaifeng was an international city where scholars and diplomats went from all over the world. One document dated from 1489 is a stone inscription telling of their life back to Abraham. Their first synagogue was built in 1163, and it was repaired and renovated until the 19th century when their last rabbi died without a successor." Their prayer book was written in both Hebrew and Chinese. Within one-hundred years they had ten rabbis.

"Jews adapted very well to Chinese society because China never experienced anti-Semitism. People ask why Chinese people never discriminate against Jews. First of all it is very simple. Chinese cannot tell differences between Jews and non-Jews... Number two, religion never played a very important role in Chinese history."

There were seventy families in Kaifeng culture and by the fifteenth century the population peaked at approximately 5,000. Between the 15th and 16th century some Jews became Chinese officials because they could pass the civil exams to

be qualified for the job. Two of them became generals, serving in the royal army. From the 17th century on Jews in Kaifeng took on the family surnames which the emperor of China gave them, so most Jews in China became identified with these names. Most Chinese did not know about Jews until this century. The discovery of the Jews of Kaifeng by the West was made in the 17th century by some Jesuit missionaries: "Ever since then Jews in China were brought back to Europe and ever since then missionary scholars came to visit them. For Christians it was a big discovery." At first the Kaifeng Jews thought the missionaries were other Jews because they had not been exposed to recent Christianity. Mathew, a Jesuit missionary, also thought the person that came to meet him from Kaifeng was a Chinese Christian. The Christian thought the Jews were descendents of a group of lost missionaries in the 8th century and the visiting Jew thought the Church in Beijing was a synagogue:

"When they walked into the chapel they

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A Letter From The Editor:

This issue of Shelanu has a variety of topics, but the most prominent subject is Asia. I covered Xu Xin's talk on the history of the Jews in China and I interviewed Dr. Robert Sokal at Stony Brook to bring a lesson in history closer to home. Alona Klarfeld has written an article about an Israeli man who bought the rights to the Power Rangers from a Japanese company, in order to market them in the United States. Dr. Kenny's biographical presentation was deft as can be seen in the article. We have two different perspectives on interfaith relationships. Hella Berlinger wrote one about her boyfriend converting so she could marry him, and Adam Jacobs wrote one about finding the perfect Jewish graduate student. Robert Kaiser is a regular contributor and in this issue he has two articles. Lisa Schindler wrote about Hillel outreach director, Jill Teacher. I am proud to have put together an issue with the help of all of these writers.



The Bananas

Adam Rattiner

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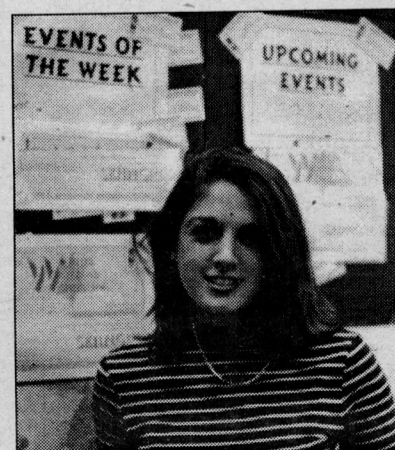
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Teicher, Hillel's Director of Outreach



China

(Continued from front)

saw the picture of Mary and Jesus, but in his mind he thought that this image was not allowed in the chapel, and he thought it was the image of Rebecca and Esau. The visitor from Kaifeng spoke with Mathew and they both realized they came from different religions. The last rabbi of the Kaifeng group died in the 19th century, and so the community perished as well when the mid 19th century China was forced to open its country to the West. Jews came from India to do business and Jews came from Russia because of the Russian Revolution and the pogroms: "Around 1905 the Jewish community reached 500. They built a synagogue and they had clubs. By 1920 the Jewish community there already reached 15,000, the largest Jewish community not only in China but also in the far east." Later on with the Japanese invasion of Manchuria the population declined, and the Chinese Jews went South to China to join the Shanghai Jewish community during World War II.

Photo by Bill Bennett



Professors Robert Hoberman, Carole Kessner, Xu Xin, and Robert Goldenberg

Many of the Jewish refugees from Germany could not go to many countries because they needed a visa, but "Shanghai was the only international city at the time which required nothing. More than twenty thousand refugees from central Europe were saved in Shanghai from 1937 to 1941." An entire yeshivah, students, faculty, and rabbis from Transylvania was saved.

- Adam Rattiner

square. If you were not in that ghetto, if you were not living in that ghetto, you had two or three months from the proclamation to move into it." The Japanese were one of the treaty powers in Shanghai. By that time the Japanese had conquered much of southern China and the Chinese had set up a puppet government in the suburbs of Shanghai. The International Settlement, which is where the Jews lived, was divided up into a French section, a British

section, an American section, and a Japanese section. Sokal said the Chinese thought of the Jews "primarily as just Westerners" but that the Chinese were well aware that there were rich Westerners in Shanghai like the Americans, French, and the British, and there were less rich Westerners like the Russian refugees, and Russian Jews (but they had lived there already for twenty or thirty years so they were well established). We were the least

Professor at USB Survived World War II in Shanghai

While Xu was able to give a historical overview, Dr. Robert Sokal, a professor at USB was able to tell about a personal experience in China. In 1938 Sokal came to China with his mother and father from Austria. His father was in a Bokarow concentration camp and the only way to get him out was to have money for a ticket and a visa. They tried to get visas, but could not, so they resorted to go to Shanghai, the only place he could go without a visa: "The government of Shang Hai was international. It was complicated in a way because everyone was responsible and no one was responsible at the same time."

"We went to Shanghai with about 8,000 other Austrian Jews, and all together about 20,000 central European Jews." Sokal's family got by a number of ways: his mother ran a restaurant, his father was in the painting business, and because of inflation they were able to sell chemicals for a profit. In Austria his father had had a small chain of paint stores, but in China he only did a little business. The business did well as long as "people with money were coming off boats. The new refugees were coming in. The flow was stopped by the various councils from the treaty countries that ruled Shanghai, and they prohibited further

immigration. So that is why only 20,000 Jews came, otherwise hundreds of thousand would have come surely."

Sokal was able to get an education while he was in China. Although there was a school for refugees, and an opportunity to serve as an apprentice after that, he was educated in a public school constructed on the model of a British public school. "My parents produced some money the first semester, and I couldn't have stayed there because we couldn't afford it, but I was faced with the choice of becoming a locksmith or plumber, or staying in school. I became a very good student; I hadn't been such a good student in Austria." Sokal picked up English very fast, and he became the best student in his class, so he got a scholarship.

"We lived for a long time on inflation. During the war we were cut off from a lot of the world and it was difficult to get chemicals of various sorts. My father in making paint, and shoe polish had stored various quantities of chemicals. These chemicals appreciated enormously in value." By selling that over time they were able to survive tough times.

"A ghetto was eventually established by the Japanese and this ghetto was perhaps eight miles

well established." Despite the fact that he lived in the ghetto he was permitted to leave for certain hours to attend college. The university was founded by missionaries but by that time all the American teachers had been turned in as prisoners of war. The teachers left were Chinese who were educated in America so they all spoke English "of a sort." The ghetto, unfortunately was run by a man named Goya who was "certifiably mad or insane; He called himself the king of the Jews." He tore up Sokal's pass one time, and he thought that was the end of his college career, but a few days later he went back to Goya. Goya forgot who Sokal was so he gave him a new pass. In 1948 Sokal came to the United States with his family. He went to the University of Chicago, and got his first job at the University of Kansas as a professor of statistics and biology. He stayed there until 1969 when he came to Stony Brook where he is now a "Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Ecology and Evolution." His wife, Julie, is Chinese and they have been happily married for over forty years.

One third of the Jews went back to Israel in 1948. The last service in a synagogue in Shanghai was in 1956 and the last Jew in Shanghai died in 1986. Xu said, "Of course today people ask whether there is a Jewish community in China now. Actually there is still one in Hong Kong. Now they have more than 4,000 members; a very active, dynamic Jewish community. In less than fifteen months Hong Kong will return to China so there will be a living Jewish community within Chinese territory."

-AdamRattiner



Shirley Strum Kenney

Shirley Strum Kenney Speaks On "Growing Up Jewish In a Small Town in Texas"

Dr. Shirley Strum Kenney, President of the State University at Stony Brook, spoke on "Growing Up Jewish In a Small Texas Town" on Thursday, April 28 in the Javits room. Fifty people attended. Kenney has mixed a teaching and research career with administrative leadership. She received a bachelor of journalism and a B.A. in English from the University of Texas; M.A. from the University of Minnesota; Ph. D. from the University of Chicago; and an honorary doctorate from the University of Chicago. She is married to Robert W. Kenney and they have five children.

"As a Texas Jewish woman I used to wonder which characteristic dominated my character; Texas, or Jewish, or woman. And at that point it was hard to say. Now I'm no longer a Texan, well not as much as I once was, and I am deeply involved in Jewish and non-Jewish issues in the world. Needless to say, in the New York academic community many of my colleagues are Jewish women. But when I thought about the topic the people that came to mind were my family, my grandmother, my mother, my daughter, and my granddaughters. In us lies a long stretch of American Jewish life.

Kenny's grandmother was born in Russia in the 1870s, came through Ellis Island and died in Texas in 1960. Her mother is a Texan who grew up orthodox, got her degree in sociology at the University of Texas, taught, helped her father start her business and then raised her family. Her daughter grew up with her four brothers in the Washington area and is now in Virginia. Her granddaughters are growing up in Manhattan, children of her son, the Rabbi.

Every year her grandmother's descendents have a thanksgiving reunion in her hometown, Tyler. Seventy or eighty of her "dearest" come and she has been to every one of them, twenty-two of them.

"We now have in that family dearly beloved Protestants, Catholics, Buddhists, but those reunions are

distinctly Jewish. We shared there a baby naming ceremony, a wedding, a funeral, and several great dedications, together, a family, all of us in the Jewish tradition."

Kenny explained that there is a "colossal difference" in being Jewish in an urban environment and in a small town. Women who grow up in Dallas and Houston have experiences more comparable to New York women. Where she lived, in Tyler four of the three hundred students in her high school class were Jewish and she was one of those students. "Their is a significant difference between being a New York Jewish intellectual, and a Texas kid who likes to read."

She led a small town life. Every year she worried that she might flunk out because she had to miss school for the holy days. But every year the of the shops in the town square closed for Rosh Hoshona and Yom Kippur because "most of them belonged to Jewish shop keepers." During the war Jewish soldiers from a nearby army camp ate with her family. Besides performing in school plays she acted in the Purim plays and "because there were only three girls and one boy" she had to play the role of Mordeci "which probably destroyed a promising acting career."

"On the other hand I learned to ride horses, I went to non-Jewish summer camp, I won all the spelling bees, I shelled bushels of peas to can or to freeze in the summer... I devoured just about every book in the public library, next door to my uncle's furniture store. I went to slumber parties almost every Saturday night, and once in a while I went to the Methodist Church with my best friend, Betty Lou, the next day." She was editor of the high school paper, the Lion's Tale, and she was a "baton twirler." She was valedictorian despite being absent on the holidays. One of the driving forces behind Kenny's success was that she had parents that expected a lot of her.

Her college education was similarly compartmentalized. She had Jewish friends, briefly

joined a Jewish Sorority, and was somewhat involved with Hillel. "Although my academic life was completely secular, I edited the University newspaper, the Daily Texan, and I continued to twirl my baton at football games. With great relief, not so long ago, I learned that Ruth Beta Ginsberg was a baton twirler."

"The war was my first revelation that being Jewish was not just having a religion....Along with about everyone being Jewish, who lost relatives in the concentration camps, and we had Texas relatives, six uncles, two cousins, fighting and taken prisoner. And then there were those Jewish soldiers from New York and Chicago and other exotic places who were stationed in Tyler. They knew Hebrew, rapid and foreign sounding without a Texas twang."

"The upshot is that I find it hard to compartmentalize my character and professional inclination by the effects of religion, geography, or other accidents of birth. Gefilte fish, enchiladas, corn bread, are all very much a part of my culture, a fact that in no doubt, in its own way, helped to shape me for the work I now do."

Three of her grandparents passed through Ellis Island. Her father's father came at age fourteen with an uncle, her mother's father came from Russia, "worked in New York a while and then worked his way to Texas as a peddler. He started a business with my grandmother's two uncles who then sent for her to come and be his bride." They raised eleven children together and he became a leading business man in Tyler.

"I came to New York through a very different route. I came northward rather than westward and with a very different accent. When I came to New York I felt a rush of joy at the recognition of roots I had not known I had. At Queens College, where I was president for nine years, half of the students were immigrants and children were immigrants and children of immigrants. People on the faculty were to. Those professors, many

How An Israeli Tycoon Marketed Japan's Power Rangers

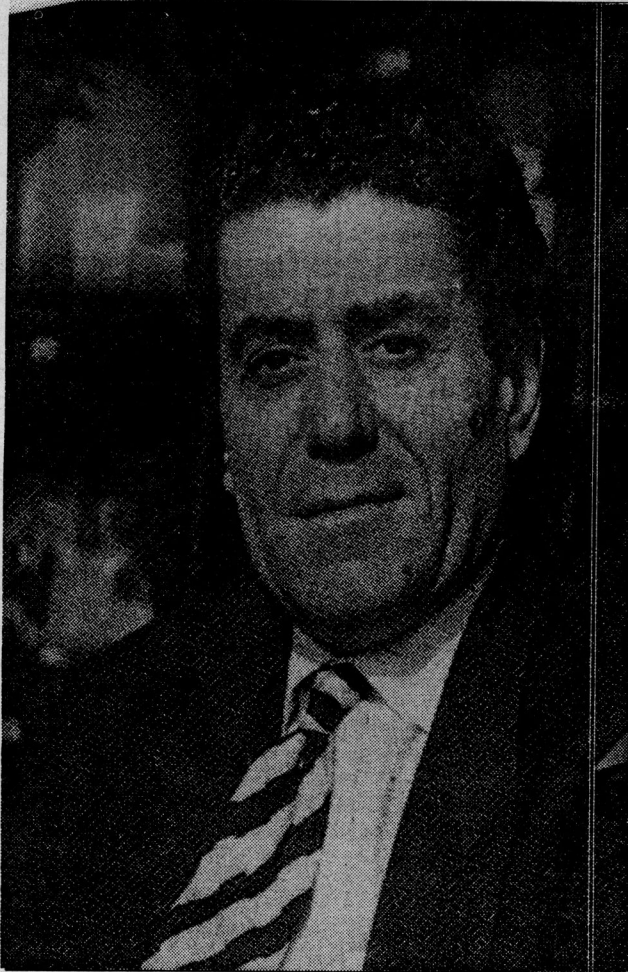
Haiim Saban, at age 51, is considered to be one of the richest Israelis in the world being worth over a billion dollars. All this is thanks to his "Power Rangers" which can be viewed in movie theaters across the United States starting on April 20th under their new title, "Zeo Rangers."

Looking from miles away one can not overlook the bold title bearing the name "SABAN" crowning a skyscraper on Willshire Blvd. Every one of his fourteen "children shows" that are screened on American networks, as well as on every one of his 4,000 shows that are found in his own library, one of the largest in the world, and on almost every television screen around the world, where millions of restless and devoted children sit in front of, transformed after every stunning brilliant and stupendous stunt of the Power Rangers. It is hard to believe that this vast empire that Saban has skillfully created began in the mind of an impoverished eighteen year old studying in a leaking stairway for his student aptitude tests (SAT's).

Titles do not interest Saban: "Ego? I have none of it. Nothing is of my interest except for work, and how much money I make. Even the signs bearing my name are not of condensing nature. Its purpose is to incorporate the name as part of a prominent, and a distinguished industry, to be recognized hand in hand with other renowned and influential companies such as 'Disney' and 'Warner Bros.' I want people to recognize my name; 'have you seen the logo SABAN on television?' 'Have you seen the big sign on the building?' this is how it works, this is what it's all about, this is how showbiz works".

According to Saban, he is the only Los Angeles resident that has not seen the enormous 'SABAN' from the top of the towering skyscraper: "When I'm in the car, I work", he explains. Every moment that is not devoted to or playing with his two children or sleeping, is dedicated to work. From the moment he awakes in his eight room mansion in Beverly Hills, and begins his morning exercise in his private gym, (around 5-6 a.m) he is attached to his microcassette-recorder to which he thrusts his countless ideas and innovative plans for his

company; from the new name he is going to give to the new Japanese animation show he has just purchased, to the merging or partnership he perceives in the near future between 'SABAN' and the television empire of Ropert



Mordoch. At first glance, Saban's attitude may seem arrogant and vain. But after spending over a half a day with him, you learn that Saban is a man of many faces. At times, when a decisive role is required of him he plays the rigid, unyielding and uncompromising boss that will not hesitate to fire any of his most prominent workers who fail to per-

form their tasks.

At other times, you may find the humorous side of Saban who loves comedies and sitcoms. At work, he is a combination of conciseness, objectiveness and conveys a remarkable stubbornness when he truly believes in his ideas. In another situation, when confronted the subject of Israel, Saban expressed his sensitivity when he begins to shed a hidden tear. With his mother, when talking about his children, it's the loving, patient, and caring Saban that see.

When he watches or talks about his television productions, he can be excited like a child. "Part of me is still a little boy," he states as his personality changes abruptly when the situation requires of it. This rapid transformation "is faster than the Power Rangers," the five high school teens that transform themselves into super heros." Those who believed in him could have foreseen this head spinning success 40 years ago. Foreshadowed with a harsh reality, where his family of four left an economically feasible life in Alexandria, Egypt to immigrate to a shack in Tel-Aviv, Israel. While his mother worked as a seamstress, he, the eldest, helped out working in several dif-

ferent jobs as a messenger, and an instrument player in a band, completing his high-school taking night classes. "I will never forget where I came from." He recalls those harsh, troublesome days when Matza and margarine were the only food found in the house.

These memories are part of the key to understanding Saban's personality and comprehending his infinite ambition. "It was difficult for me to see my father struggling to make ends meet. Those days helped shape my personality and instill in me my hunger for success." He never once allowed failure to put him down, but rather used it as a lesson to learn from. When he found his talent agency bankrupt in the midst of the Yom Kippur war after he had just hired a Japanese harp player, with an investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars, he found himself in a debt of over \$650,000. That is when he decided to leave the country and start a new page in his life. He arrived in Paris with enough money for a studio apartment and a mattress. Together with Noam Kaniel, a friend, they produced a song that soon became a hit. He immediately paid off his debts and began to plan his own company, known as: 'Saban Entertainment'

In 1984, in a hotel in Tokyo, he sat in front of a television screen, flipping the channels. When suddenly his finger froze over one channel where a group of young kids, dressed in cheap colorful costumes were able to prevent a wicked witch from destroying the world, through karate kicks, flips, and animal shaped robots. The storyline was basic, yet the show needed much polishing and editing. Anyone else would have probably changed the channel. Not Saban, who began racing out of the hotel in search of the show's Japanese production company. In Japan the show was known as, 'Zeo Rangers'. It was a hit show in Japan for over 25 years, yet no one else outside Japan yearned to invest in it. With a figure of about six numbers, Saban purchased the rights to the show. "The simplicity of the show is where it derives its power from. 'Power Rangers' is humus, not caviar, this simplicity is its charm that is captured in the hearts of the children. One day, after eight years of rejections and disappointments, Saban showed the tape to Margaret Los, President of children shows for the Fox Five Network.

Unexpectedly she found that the show has some potential. In spite of expected amount of loss, the show was aired. To everyone's surprise the show reached unprecedented success. A wave of hysteria called for a demand in products that depicted the

Frequently Asked Questions About Judaism

Question: What is Classic German Reform? What is Modern Reform / Progressive Judaism? Answer:

The origin of the Reform movement: Reform is the most liberal of the major movements within Judaism. It started in the 1800s in Germany during the emancipation, and encouraged examination of religion with an eye towards rationality and egalitarianism. Viewed from the light of today's Reform practice, the original adherents went too far; This form (which lasted until the 1960s, in some respects) is referred to as "Classic German Reform".

The Classic German Reform movement decried traditional Jewish practices such as circumcision and the laws of family purity as "barbaric". Among the 'Reforms' instituted by the Reform leadership in the late 1800s were the following changes:

Circumcision was abandoned. The Hebrew language was removed from the liturgy and replaced with German.

The hope for a restoration of the Jews in Israel was officially renounced, and it was officially stated that Germany was to be the new Zion.

The ceremony in which a child celebrated becoming Bar Mitzvah was removed, and replaced with a church style 'confirmation' ceremony.

All the laws of Kashrut and family purity were officially declared "repugnant" to modern thinking people, and were removed.

Shabbat, the Jewish Sabbath, was moved to Sunday, and all the Shabbat restrictions were removed. The Reform Jewish clergy even adopted the robes of their counterparts in Churches.

After a few years of experimentation, and after a huge amount of Jewish immigration to America had occurred, America's Reform Jews decided that the movement should define itself on paper once and for all. In 1885 the Reform movement held its Pittsburgh Conference, which produced the original platform of Reform Judaism.

In eight sharply worded paragraphs, it dismisses "such Mosaic and rabbinical laws as regulate diet, priestly purity and dress" as

anachronisms that only obstruct spirituality in the modern age. It stressed that Reform Jews must only be accepting of laws that they feel "elevate and sanctify our lives" and must reject those customs and laws that "not adapted to the views and habits of modern civilization.

but they extend to many other aspects of Jewish living, including: creating a Jewish home centered on family devotion, life long study, private prayer and public worship, daily religious observance; keeping the Sabbath and the holy days..." Even in regard to Zionism the

initial angry antagonism was replaced by enthusiasm, and aliyah (immigration to Israel) was encouraged.

Today when one visits a Reform Temple one can even find a substantial amount of Hebrew in their prayer books, although this is only a small fraction of what is contained in the traditional Jewish prayer book, the Siddur.

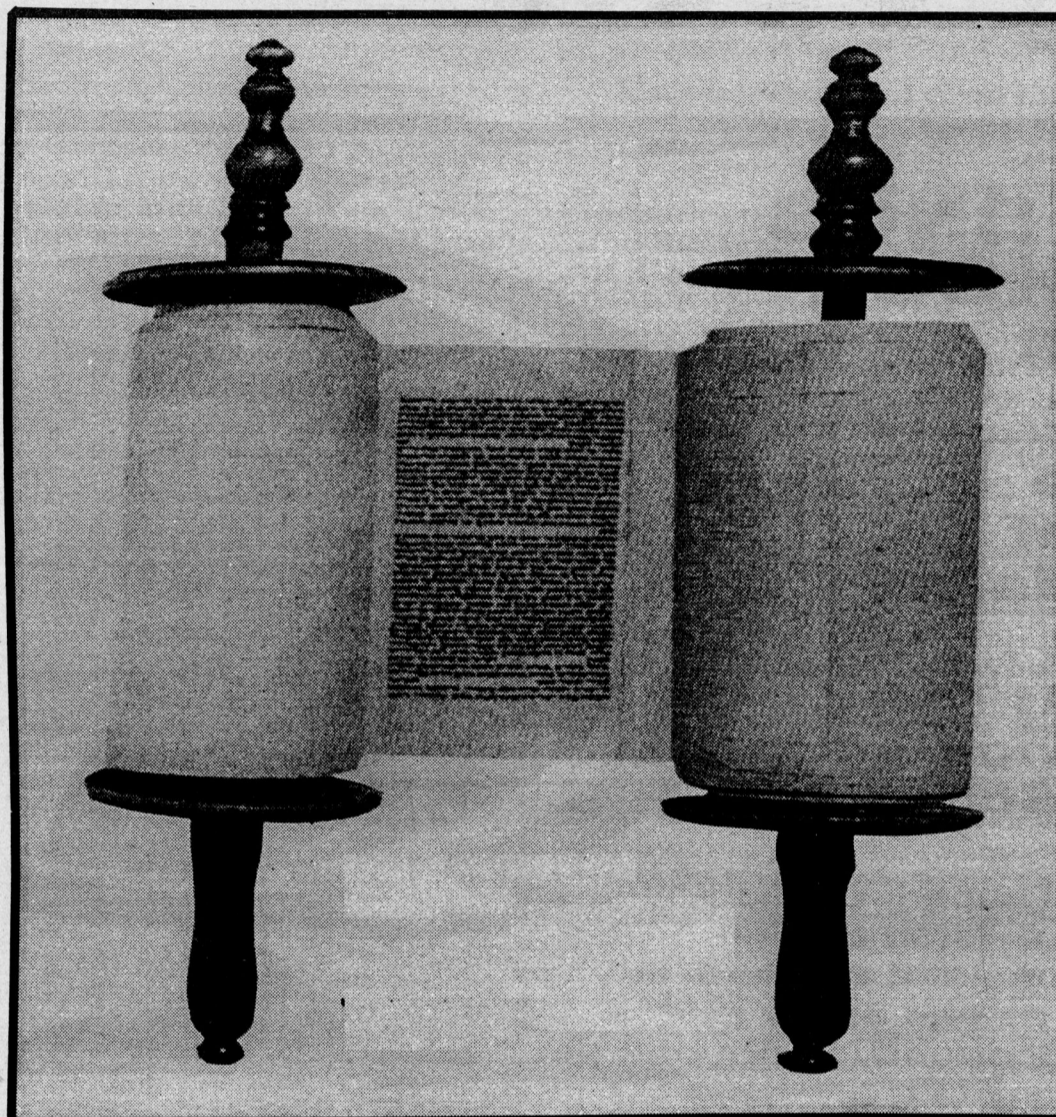
The Theology of Reform Judaism:

Instead of believing in the revelation at Mount Sinai as the basis for Judaism, the Reform leaders based their theology on an theory called "Progressive Revelation". According to that doctrine, God reveals his will to mankind through the use of human reason and moral striving. As such, early Reform leaders stated that any non-

ethical law contained in the Torah was null and void, and cancelled by the later Jewish prophets. Traditional Jews were taken aback by this, as this is not only abrogated all Jewish law, but was also one of the basic tenets of Christianity. (See the writings of St. Paul in the New Testament) Many of today's modern Reform Jews are questioning this principle, and in the committed laity and leadership of the movement there has been a trend towards reclaiming some of the traditional Jewish beliefs.

How Reform Judaism deals with Halakha:

Reform Judaism strongly recommends individual study of the traditional practices; However, the adherent is free to follow only those practices that they feel increase the sanctity of their relationship to God. Thus each person has his or her own customizable religion, with their own unique beliefs and practices. [In the words of the occultist Aleister Crowley "Do what thou wilt shall be the whole of the Law".]



In the decades following these events, a reevaluation took place in which many members of the Reform movement began to question their total disassociation from traditional Judaism. As such, in 1937 in Columbus, Ohio a new platform was written that in many ways was a stunning reversal of almost all the of the ideology contained in the original platform. Unfortunately, while the rhetoric had an almost total reversal, the actual practices of the movement with respect to Jewish law did not change. Nearly forty years later Reform Judaism issued a Centenary Perspective that not only supported the 1937 platform - it moved even further in a traditional direction.

In this latest statement, Reform Judaism claims that Judaism is not merely a religion, but "an uncommon union of religion and peoplehood...bound together by...by [The Hebrew] language, and, history, culture and institutions". This statement also took the daring step of suggesting that Reform Jews actually should follow some laws, because Judaism's claims "may begin with our ethical obligations

Graduate Student Home Hospitality

Last semester the Graduate Student Organization for Jewish Life finally got off the ground and began a series of meetings and programs designed to meet the needs of the graduate, medical, dental and professional students on campus. In addition to the monthly catered meetings, and the heavily attended Matzoh Ball, a series of Home Hospitality Shabbatons have been held.

Nu, so when is the Shabbaton? It is a monthly Friday night event held in a nearby, off-campus home. Nu, so what is a Shabbaton? It is place in space and time where we leave the work week behind, and move together into the realm of the Sabbath. How does it start? With shmoozing of course. Next we run a beginners service that uses a traditional text, and allows for egalitarian participation. Many graduate students on campus aren't really all that familiar with the traditional Shabbat Service, so we make sure to explain each component

of the service, in a roundtable group discussion atmosphere. Everyone is invited to come forward and teach whatever they may know, and to offer any melodies for the songs that they might have to share. We strive to make the service have the best features of Orthodox, Conservative and Reform services, where everyone can participate as much or as little as they wish.

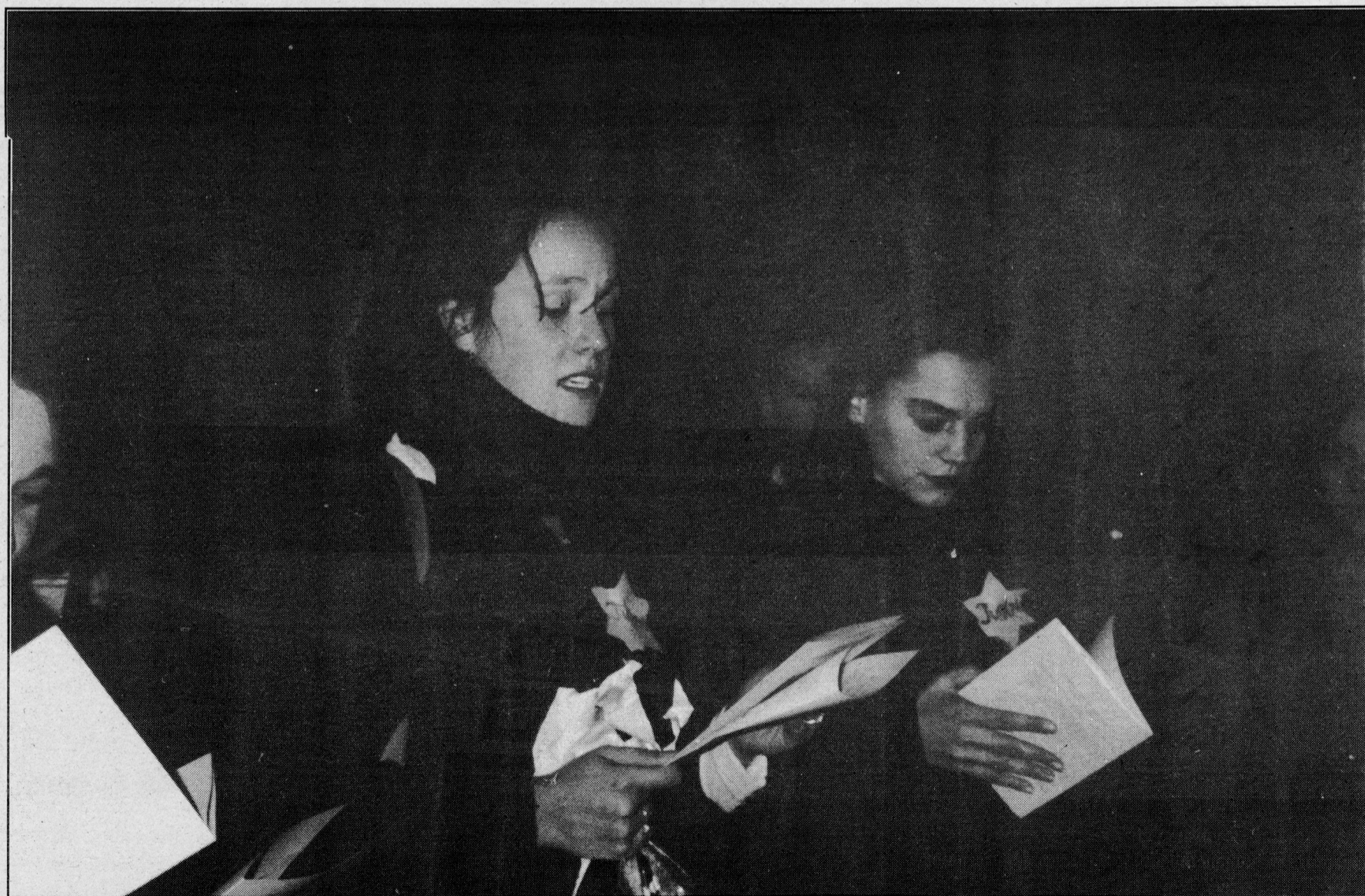
Of course, this is only the beginning. The central feature of the Shabbaton is the delicious pot luck kosher dinners we have, in which the host prepares a main course, and the guests all bring some kosher or vegetarian appetizer or side dish. Without exaggerating, I can honestly say that these dinners have turned out not only better than the Kosher cafeteria, but probably better than most restaurants. People stay at these events for hours, eating and talking, and generally getting to know one another.

Its nice to have a place to go once a month,

where you can observe a traditional Shabbat with your friends, and where you can meet new friends as well. As we light the candles and sanctify the Sabbath, we find that we leave the stress of campus life behind. When we say 'ha-motzi lechem min ha'aretz' over the Challah, we transform what would be an ordinary meal into a communal, warm and Shabbosdig experience. When someone offers to teach a new tune for one of the prayers in Birkat HaMazon (Grace after meals) we somehow are brought together in a way that just doesn't seem to ever happen outside of a Shabbaton.

The Graduate Home Hospitality Shabbatons may well be one of the most comfortable and enjoyable Jewish experience you ever could take part in; We really hope to see you at the next one !

-Robert Kaiser



Aleksandra Ikanowicz, and Jennifer Glass at the Memorial Event Held in November to Commemorate Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass

Holocaust Remembered

Aleksandra Ikanowicz came to this country when she was 10 years old. Until then, while growing up in Poland, she had never heard mention of the Holocaust nor had she met anybody who was Jewish. In the Fall Semester of this, her senior year at Stony Brook, Ikanowicz took Professor Carole Kessner's Holocaust course and was shocked to learn of the extent to which Poles actively participated in Hitler's horrific plan to exterminate all Jews. She was also shocked, when speaking to fellow students, that so few knew or even cared about the Holocaust and what it meant.

Ikanowicz, an Art History minor, realized the importance of making as many people as possible aware of the horrors of the Holocaust. She acted immediately and began working with Marcia Wiener, Director of the SBU Union Craft Center and Hillel on bringing Holocaust art, a memorial service and exhibition to Stony Brook.

"Many people are hostile and are really tired of hearing about the Holocaust, but then I meet people who

don't know anything about it," says Ikanowicz, who worked tirelessly on the entire Holocaust program. She joined a Hillel of New York trip to Washington's Holocaust Museum and collected numerous materials for an exhibition of Holocaust information displayed on Holocaust Memorial Day on the university's academic mall.

"I don't feel guilt for what happened," said Ikanowicz surrounded by Holocaust art at the Memorial service held in the Union Art Gallery, "but I feel terribly sad to know how many Poles today do not feel the same way as I do. In fact," she said, "there are too many people who just do not care about the Holocaust."

This remarkable and concerned human being is an example of how much ONE person can do. It's the Aleksandra Ikanowicz of this world, those who care and then act, that make it a better place.

—
Lauren Garlick is Hillel's Assistant Director

Holocaust - the meaning of the word

"It is the accepted word by which historians and scholars, poets and writers, presidents and ordinary men and women refer to the cataclysmic events of 1933-45. But despite its widespread usage, the word is inappropriate. The word is Greek in origin. The Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, translates the Hebrew word 'olah' as 'holokaustou.' The Hebrew literally means that which is offered up. It signifies a burnt offering offered whole unto the Lord. The word itself softens and falsifies the event by giving it a religious significance.

...For the first time in history, Jews were persecuted not for their religious beliefs and practices, but because of their so-called racial identity, irrevocably transmitted through the blood of their grandparents.

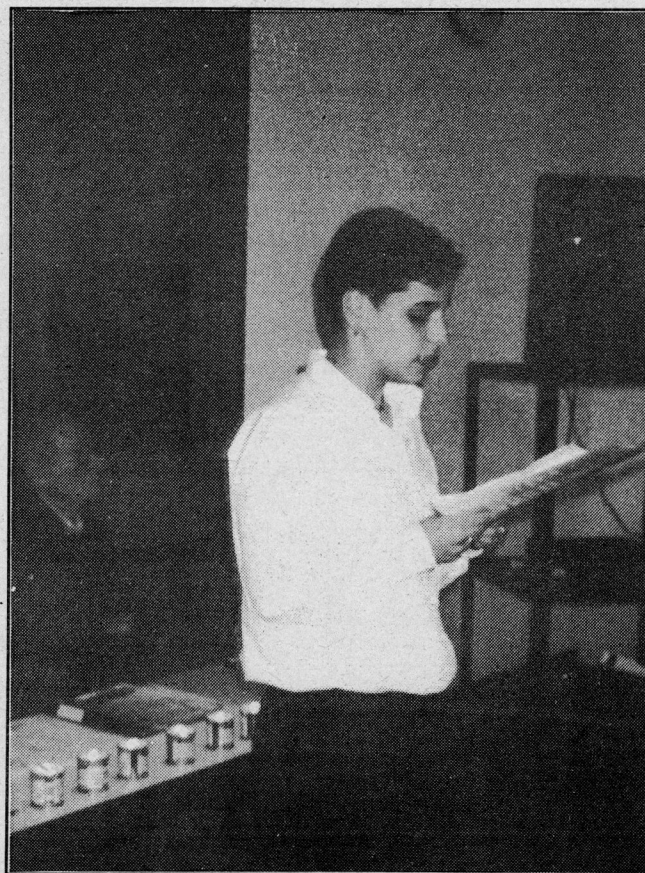
—*Excerpt from "The World Must Know"*

by Michael Berenbaum

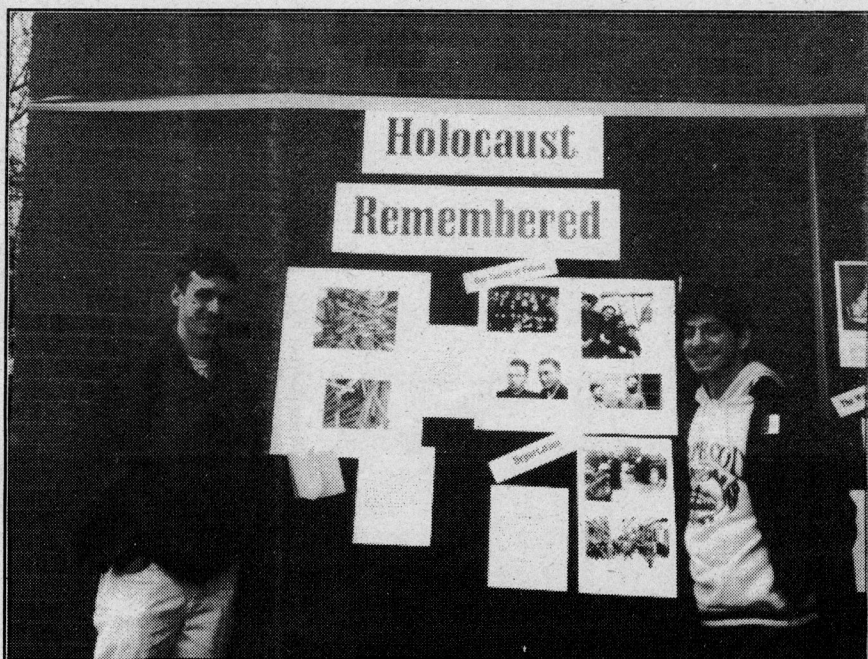
—*Lauren Garlick*



Holocaust program planner Aleksandra Ikanowicz, Lauren Garlick, and Prof. Carole Kessner



Karen Zolotov, the new Polity president, reading a farewell letter from a mother to her daughter written before the mother was transported to a concentration camp.



Holocaust program planner Eugene Gross and Jeff Lubin, Hillel Student Club

So, He's Not Jewish

Being brought up in a Jewish household, I never thought I would ever marry outside my religion. However, as the old saying goes, "you can never control who you fall in love with." I met Michael four years ago, and we started dating, until my mother disapproved, and I was forced to breakup with him, since he was not Jewish.

It might seem absurd that at the age of 17, my mother still controlled my relationships, but I was always mommy's little girl," and figured that she's probably right, I shouldn't date outside my religion.

One year later, Michael and I started seeing each other again, behind my mother's back. I felt as if I were a 13 year old, sneaking off with some boy. I knew that I would have to tell my parents at some point, since my father was against me seeing a non-Jew as well. I didn't, think that Michael and I were just a fling, and it probably v I last anyway. Therefore, why should I even bother my parents about it, if it wasn't a long-term thing. Boy, was I mistaken. Within a month, Michael and I were already thinking about what we would name our children.

We fell head over heels in love, and tried to avoid the subject of religion. Eventually, my parents

realized that I was in love with Michael, and started giving me speeches about how our family would never approve#, and how there are so many wonderful Jewish boys out there. But I didn't want anybody else; I wanted



Michael. I figured my parents wouldn't understand that I was the happiest I had ever been. After all, it's been many years since they first fell in love, and felt all those amazing feelings.

All I kept trying to do, was make them realize that

I was happy; what difference does it make if a Jewish boy made me happy, or a Catholic boy? I was happy; that's what was important, right? Actually, it wasn't as simple as that.

Suddenly, my family started calling me from Israel, trying to convince me that I was doing such an awful thing, and I should breakup with him at once. The thought of leaving Michael never entered my mind, not even until this day. The issue did come up between us, and I told Michael that I want, to raise my children in a Jewish home. I was afraid of his reaction, but it came as a shock. Michael wanted to convert to Judaism. At first I thought he was saying that just so we could put the issue to rest. However, it's been about a year and half since his decision, and since then he's been learning the language, attending religious gatherings with me, and expressing great interest in my religion.

My parents have learned to accept Michael as a big part of my life; after all, it's been three years for us. We recently got engaged, and plan to marry in the next two years. Michael will soon begin the conversion process, and I am grateful that I found someone who would go to such great lengths for love. I can't imagine spending the rest of my life with anyone else.

-Hella Berlinger

Finding the Perfect Jewish Date

Boy meets girl. Boy brings home girl to his mother. Dressed more than appropriately, the girl shakes the mother's hand with great delight and pleasure. The mother senses something wrong with this girl, although not quite sure of what it is. Then it hits her - hard. Like her own son slapped her across the face. This young girl was wearing a cross; a fairly large cross around her neck. The mother felt faint. The son immediately picked up on what his mother was seeing and quickly made other introductions. The mother pulled her son aside and said, "A schicksa you bring me? You'll never eat a good meal again!" And this is life for most of today's Jewish youth.

Where are young, single Jewish students, not only here at Stony Brook, but at other schools as well, supposed to find a mate that fits the criteria that is set upon them by the Jewish society? Your mother wants Jewish grandchildren, your father wants a grandson to carry on his name and to be to say the motze at his Bar Mitzvah and the list goes on and on and on....

Everyone thinks that they have the answer. Go

to Hillel, go to a Jewish singles dance, go to Shabbat services, go join the local synagogue, go on a talk show if all else fails!! How is it that everyone around you seems to have the solution for your dating dilemma? Why do they think that you are the type of person that can go to a singles dance and automatically be swarmed by hundreds of eligible Jews looking for that perfect you? They don't have the answer. They only think that they have the answer, but it is up to you to find that perfect "soul-mate". There is a lot of pressure on Jewish teenagers to date and marry only other Jewish teens, especially on our generation. People are so afraid that the Jewish population will die out if Jews don't marry within their own religion.

But have no fear; if you seek, you will find. There are plenty of places on campus and in surrounding areas in which you are able to find an eligible (eligible meaning nice, smart, attractive, etc....if you are looking for Cindy Crawford or Brad Pitt, sorry, can't help you!) mate. There are always events going on sponsored by the Hillel where you can go and talk and are

under no pressure. If you feel that the event is not for you, you can leave. It is not like you are under any sort of contract. And you can try another event at another time, if you so desire. There are also plenty of fraternity and sorority events on campus that are predominately organized for the Jewish population. And what is wrong with attending a Shabbat dinner or service? If nothing else at all, at least you get a decent meal out of it.

But once the pressure is put upon you, it is harder to find someone that you can get along with. You have all of these concerns such as will he or she please my parents or are they Jewish enough or are they too Jewish. These concerns are just added to your list of qualities that you want to find in a mate already. You get all flustered and confused and just want the perfect person to jump out of a hat and say "Surprise! I am here, I am Jewish and I want to marry YOU!" This unfortunately will never happen, no matter how hard to pray to G-d.

-Adam B. Jacobs

Why I Love Israel

Dear Diary,

I love Israel. I have never been there, but I just know that I love Israel. I really want to go there someday. I know that I'll love it by the pictures that I have seen, by the stories that I have heard, and by the information I have been given by my five great friends who have chosen to spend this year there. I am constantly receiving letters in the mail from Dan, Devora, Stacy, Andrea and Dave. I get so excited whenever I hear from one of them. Whenever I run downstairs to my mailbox, I always have a letter from at least one of them, each with different stories to tell, and they each experience different days and live different lives. But no matter how different their lives are, they all share one thing in common: the fear of dying. I am constantly worrying about each of them. Whenever I watch the news and hear of yet another terrorist bombing in Israel, my stomach turns. I get these awful pictures in my head of me answering the phone, and on the other end my friend's mother telling me that Dan's bus was bombed or Stacy's cab was hijacked.

When I express these feelings to my friends in my letters to them, I am repeatedly being told not to worry. They seem to get mad at me. But how can I not worry?! In a recent letter Dan states how he was "in the chicken coupe (on the Moshov) and heard of the bombing in Jerusalem." He froze, but told me not to worry, and that he was OK. Stacy sent me a "lucky shekel" yesterday. She told me to keep it in my wallet and it would bring me good luck. I would think that she would need that shekel more than I. The only luck that I hope it brings me is that they all come home safely.

Oh, did I tell you? Devora has met a young man — a boyfriend — in Israel. He is an insurance salesman, and when she called me over Pesach to wish me a happy holiday, I spoke to him. His name is Koby. He told me not to worry, and that Devora was in a safe place. It made me feel a bit better knowing that she was with a native of Israel.

I don't know why, but it did. I guess that I just feel as if Koby knows where to hide if G-d forbid anything should happen to them. They seem as though

they are happy together. Devora has given up her spot at the University of Hartford and has decided to return to Israel in October to study there. I wonder where ... maybe Hebrew University. I knew that she would always end up living there; she has always said that she wanted to, but so soon? I hope that she doesn't regret her decision!

Dave has me a bit scared. In his letters it seems as though he is not very knowledgeable of the Hebrew language. He seems to be getting along pretty well there though. The people, he says, are quite nice and that if an Israeli hears him struggling to converse with a vendor, they come and try to help him. That makes me feel good. It is a great feeling to know that the natives of Israel welcome Americans with open arms. It makes me want to go there so much more!

Well, diary, enough writing to you. I must go reply to Dan now. He told me in his last letter that the oldest daughter on his Moshov visited him on the Kibbutz he is now on. I wonder what happened!

Love,

Adam B. Jacobs

Who Is At Stony Brook: Jill Teicher, Hillel's Director of Outreach

She finds you while tabling in the Union, she comes to your residence halls and she hangs bright, colorful fliers up so you will come to her. No matter how she does it, Jill finds Jewish students on campus and then gives them meaningful Jewish experiences. So where did she get her meaningful experiences and why does she feel a need to share them? Well, she remembers being affected from as early as pre - school.

Jill was raised in Bellmore in a conservative Jewish household. At the time she was growing up, there was only one conservative temple in her town. When the reform temple started in her community, many people shifted over. Her family stayed so she was always a little more religious than her friends. She moved to Baldwin where she also joined a conservative temple. She hated temple and Hebrew

school there because she didn't know anybody, since she went to a different elementary school than most of the other Hebrew School Students. Everybody had friends and Hebrew school was considered more of a social function than a religious learning experience. If you didn't have friends it was a miserable experience. Even so, she learned and made the best of it.

After she became a Bat-Mitzvah, her mom gave her a choice to continue on with Hebrew high school or to work in her temple. She didn't care to do either since she had hated Hebrew School in Baldwin for so long. So she decided to go for the option that would allow her to make money. She tutored and helped in kindergarten, but her main job was in the library. When the librarian got sick Jill ran the library. She remembers looking through books at pictures of Israel. That began her dream of seeing all these places. When she did, that added what was missing from her Jewish identity. In the end of the year, Jill was asked to join a youth group called BBG (B'nai B'rith Girls) which was part of BBYO (B'nai B'rith Youth Organization). Soon she became a member of the regional board, went to International Convention, regional conventions and participated in an interregional conclave. In her senior year of high school, she moved and started a BBG chapter which is now one of the largest chapters in the Nassau/Suffolk Region.

When looking in to colleges, she looked in to Hillel. However, when she was a freshman she became involved with social life on campus (a sorority) and met friends through her cousin who was already there, so she never got involved. Because of her strong religious background, Jill

remained an active Jewish student.

That summer her mom saw an advertisement for a USD/AZYF (University Student Department of the American Zionist Youth Foundation) Conference. Jill called for information about the organization, even though the event passed. When they heard she was from the U of D, they called her back. She knew little about Israel but they had never had a representative at Delaware. USD started sending her mailings, but she never read them and they piled up in a corner. Her roommate would bring them up from the mail room and throw them on her bed saying "More Jewish Mail".

After Thanksgiving, Jason Hoffman, the Regional Director of the Mid-Atlantic Region of USD, was going to be at Hillel for a program. She really didn't want to go but begged all her friends to come with her because she felt like she had to. Eventually she went alone and was planning on just

staying long enough to finally meet Jason whom she had only talked to, but she saw a friend that was going to BGU so she stayed to hear about it and instantly fell in love. She had to go and couldn't wait. She had an interview on the spot, was given an application that she faxed in the next day, and four weeks later she was on her way to Israel. It was a hard decision for her because she had met her boyfriend, had a great group of friends, and she was sad to leave. It turned out to be the best experience of her life. She loved the semester abroad, her independence, and learning another culture and language.

When she returned, she worked hard as a USD representative. She spoke at Hillel brunches about Ben Gurion University and other Israel programs. She also helped start DIPAC (Delaware Israel Public Affairs), as their Vice President, which was a part of AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) and later served as their liaison to the U of D. Jill went to the Annual Policy Conferences and was asked to run a workshop at a conference at Princeton University.

She decided to major in sociology with a concentration in Applied Urban Studies. She interned at city hall in Newark and her future plan was to work with foreign governments. She also had a paid internship for the summer at the City of Long Beach. But she was yearning to go back to Israel, so she canceled the internship and was back on a plane. Eventually her future plans took a turn when she was studying Hebrew with one of her friends who worked at Hillel. Jill saw an advertisement for someone motivated, creative caring about their religion, and wanting to work

with college students. She was doing just that at college so decided "why not get paid for it?" She didn't get the job, but became motivated to look into jobs in the Jewish Communal Services field. She had never given any thought before about going into the Jewish field or working for Hillel.

Jill is dedicated to Jewish life. She likes being creative, programing and working with students. She spreads what she has learned about Judaism and shows that she had fun doing it.

Jill loves to do anything outdoors like roller blading, swimming, hiking, cycling, and walking. She enjoys spending time by herself reading and relaxing. She enjoys working out and being with her family. There are many possibilities in Jill's future. She considers getting her masters of science in business at Ben Gurion University in Israel or maybe a masters in university administration. She doesn't know how long she will stay in this job, but she will always remain a volunteer in the Jewish community. She will be getting engaged soon, and hopes to start a family. She would also like to live somewhere where she can be outdoors year round.

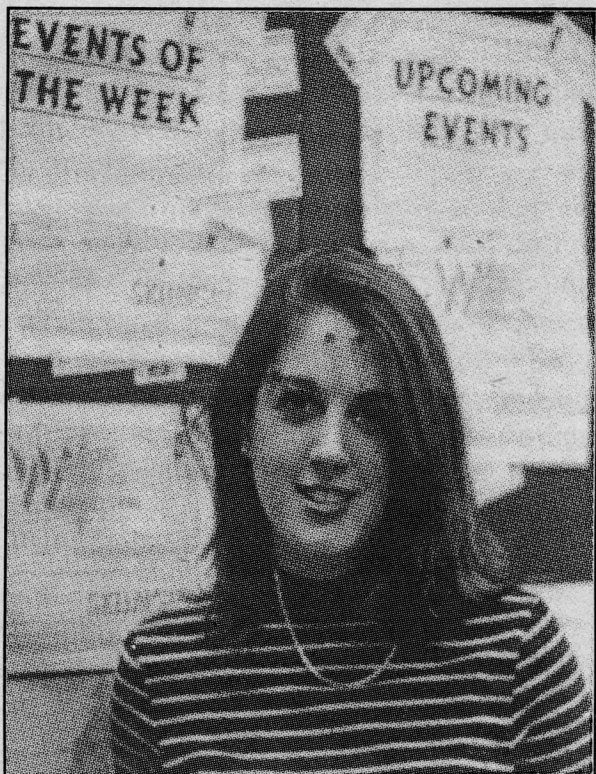
People think religion is boring, but Jill has exciting Shabbat dinners and goes to interesting conferences. Her main goal is to express how much she enjoys it.

She is the Director of Outreach for the Hillel Foundation for Jewish Life. The concept of Outreach is fairly new to Hillel. Before, Hillel primarily catered to committed Jewish students who took an active interest in Jewish life. Hillel realized that there were students who were not committed nor affiliated and would not think to come to Hillel. These students would not come no matter how good the advertising or programming was. In order to accommodate these students, Hillel hired outreach workers who could relate to why students didn't come to Hillel. The outreach worker's job is to plan activities that these students would be interested in attending without having to come Hillel event.

This year Jill works primarily with six target groups who are difficult to plan for. These groups are commuter students, graduate students, HSC students, sororities/fraternities, honor societies, and residents of the residence halls. She was told to find them and involve them and that is exactly what she does. At first it was a challenge and definitely a learning experience. For example, at first she thought reaching commuters would be easy. She would serve lunch to the commuter students during campus lifetime when they had no place to go, no classes, and would love free food. She found that this was not working because they did not want to be singled out and meet only commuter students. She also realized that they live off campus for a reason. The best way to reach was when she planned an outside activity: the Winter Wonderland Weekend.

The HSC students are too busy to come to programs so five times a year Jill holds a reception in the lobby. At these receptions she brings food, answers questions, and tells about the programs going on.

Besides different groups that she works with she



Quest

(Continued from page 7)

As such, a tension is now present in the Reform community: If all of the original principles of the Reform movement have been explicitly rejected by the Reform movement itself, then what is left? Indeed, the only belief that still exists from its origin is the belief that every person has absolute autonomy. But this very idea was not a core principle, but was merely derived from the other beliefs, which are no longer held to.

This tension is now reaching a nexus; Many members of the Reform movement are beginning to publicly call for a version of "Reform Halakha" to be implemented as mandatory. This 'right wing' of the Reform movement is thus seen as being very close the 'left wing' of the Conservative movement. However, it should be noted that this return to traditional Judaism is largely confined to the rabbis and lay leaders of the movement, and it remains to be seen how the laity will respond.

Question: What is Reconstructionism ?

What is Humanistic Judaism?

Answer:

Philosophically, Reconstructionism has its roots in the work of Rabbi Mordechai Kaplan, who argued for a naturalistic conception of God and a functionalist view of Judaism as a religious civilization. He acknowledged that Jewish communities have always evolved to adapt to their historical circumstances, and was particularly interested in the ways in which American Judaism could construct communities that would permit its members to live in two civilizations (American and Jewish) at once, participating fully in each of them. The Reconstructionist movement is much smaller than the Reform or Conservative movements. Reconstructionist communities are generally quite spiritually open, and quite accepting of experimentation and new liturgy.

Rabbi Kaplan taught that the tradition we have inherited (e.g. keeping shabbat and kashrut, the text of our liturgy, etc.) is our cultural inheritance of how our ancestors related to this power in the universe - it is not an unchanging divine mandate. Our tradition should, indeed must, be reconstructed in each generation to reflect our own understanding of this relationship - as Kaplan said, "The past has a vote, not a veto."

The Theology of Reconstructionist Judaism:

Kaplan's conception of God was a transnatural one; He spoke of "the power in the Universe that makes for salvation", rather than an anthropomorphic God intervening to reward and punish. By salvation, he meant the power to improve oneself, not any sort of religious salvation. By his own accord, he was a staunch atheist, and was known to be derisive

when talking about the traditional Jewish idea of God.

The philosophy of the movement he created contained a principle called "Transvaluation". This means that any person (at least the leaders of the movement) has the right to re-define a word to make it mean what they want. Kaplan did not believe in God, but he did believe that nature existed, and he also believed that the universe was open to the possibility that people could better themselves. Kaplan made a leap of logic and "transvalued" the word "God" to mean the nature of the world.

Thus, people who no longer believed in the traditional Jewish God could now call themselves "religious" and could say that they "believe in God". However, it is important to realize that their definition of "Religion" and "God" is exactly the opposite of what every other Jew, Christian, and Muslim believes. Ethical questions aside, this system proved quite appealing to a large number of people who had a deep love for the Jewish way of life, but who were not religious in the traditional sense.

The Reconstructionist movement today:

Kaplan's personal theology was extremely rationalistic, but in forming his movement's seminary he probably did not realize the long term effects. He set up a seminary in which people could train to be Reconstructionist rabbis. In doing so he encouraged the study of religious texts, even if he himself discouraged what most people would call "religion". What eventually began to happen was obvious in hindsight: Hundreds of committed Jews studied for years in a religious environment, and they began to do what Kaplan rejected his whole life: They began to believe in the traditional Jewish God, especially as God was envisioned by the Medieval Kabbalists. As a result, many people in the Reconstructionist community now have a traditional Jewish belief in God!

As such, the Reconstructionist movement is now basically made up of people who fit nicely into either the Conservative or Humanistic models of Judaism, which may be one reason why this movement never took off in popularity.

This worldview is rejected by Jews in the Humanist movement. Humanist Jews are staunch atheists, usually associated with other atheist/humanist groups. Humanists also value Jewish tradition and culture, but see Reconstructionists as being somewhat dishonest. Why, they ask, do Reconstructionists say that they believe in God, if their definition of God is the same as the belief system of atheists? At best, this misleads people with regard

to the nature of Reconstructionism. If they really were comfortable with their beliefs, they would have no need of doing such things. As such, a number of atheist Jews have come together to form Humanistic Judaism, a purely atheistic movement that while explicitly denying the belief in God, still recognizes the value of Jewish culture and tradition.

Question: What is Traditional Judaism ?

Answer: The Union for Traditional Judaism is a primarily North American movement. It is a relatively new offshoot, made up of members of the right wing of the Conservative movement and the left wing of the Orthodox movement. They attempt to be as lenient as possible within an Orthodox framework, although many Orthodox would not accept their leniencies, such as using microphones on shabbat. It was formed from the Union for Traditional Judaism and the Fellowship for Liberal Orthodox Judaism.

It has yet to be determined if conversions and divorces under Traditional auspices are acceptable within the Orthodox world. Generally, Orthodox rabbis consider Traditional rabbis to be on the 'fringe' of Orthodoxy, and deal with conversions and divorces on a case by case basis.

Question: What are some of the Orthodox sub-group?

Answer:

Traditional:

The word "Traditional" can have two different meanings. It can be a synonym for generic Orthodoxy when using the dichotomy Traditional vs. Liberal. However, more recently it has come to denote followers of the Union for Traditional Judaism.

Centrist Orthodoxy / Modern Orthodoxy / Kipa Sruga Orthodox: These terms mean an Orthodoxy which approves of many aspects of secular culture, especially secular education, in addition to traditional Torah study. They tend to be Zionist. The Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations, Yeshiva University, and the Rabbinical Council of America in some sense represents this group. In Israel, the Mizrachi organization is a well-known representative.

Yeshivish ("black hat" or "black"):

This term suggests an Orthodox outlook in which the focus of life is Torah study, as is done in Lithuanian-style Yeshivas. Secular culture is either tolerated or criticized for its corrupting influences. This group tends to be "non-Zionist" in the sense that they love the land of Israel and its holiness (many spend years in Israel for Torah study), but are unenthusiastic about secular Zionism and Israeli secular culture. Agudat Israel tends to represent this group.

-Robert Kaiser

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*The staff and students of Hillel
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Lauren Garlick
Assistant Director
who has gone above and beyond
for Stony Brook Hillel for the past six years.
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- ➔ Phenomenal Shabbaton - Sept. 6th, 7th, 8th
- ➔ Graduate Wine & Cheese Reception - Sept. 9th

Jill

Continued from page 11)

makes kits throughout the year for holidays such as Chanukah, and about Jewish traditions such as the Mezuzah. This is a way for people to learn about a holiday and get the sources to learn how to celebrate it without having to come to Hillel directly.

Much of the outreach she does involves finding students that might come back again. She talks to them and lets them know if they need anything; she is there for them.

Jill loves to do anything outdoors which includes roller blading, swimming, hiking, bicycling, and walking. She also enjoys spending time by herself reading and relaxing. Jill enjoys working out and being with her family.

There are many possibilities for Jill's future. She is considering getting her masters of science in business at Ben Gurion University in Israel or maybe a masters in university administration. She doesn't know if she will continue with this job for

long, but she would always like to remain a volunteer in the Jewish community. She will be engaged soon, and hopes to start a family. She would like to live somewhere where she will be outdoors year round.

Jill loves her job and working with students with a passion. One of the best parts about her job is the wonderful feeling she gets when she discovers that a student's life has been influenced by something she has done.
- Lisa Schindler

Kenny

Continued from page 5)

of them Jewish, got their chance, some of them as students at Queens College.

"Then I came to Stony Brook. Of course by now being thoroughly New Yorkized I expected the same ethnic culture to predominate. Wrong, Suffolk County seemed far closer to Tyler than to New York in

terms of ethnicity and culture, and yet at Stony Brook I see my grandparents story all over again. Koreans, Indians, Greeks, and Dominicans, and most recently a new influx of Russian Jews; a remembrance of those circumstances that led to my idealic Jewish childhood in Texas. At Stony Brook these immigrant's children

now get the opportunity my aunts and uncles had, and my parents had at the University of Texas sixteen years ago. So I revel at the opportunity at Stony Brook to create that most American experience all over again."

-Adam Rattiner

Saban

Continued from page 6)

show's characters. At Universal Studios a line of cars preceeded for over 15 kilometers to see the 'Power Rangers' live. Although the show has lost some of its popularity in recent years. It is still one of the most watched shows in the United States. On Saturday, April 20, 1996, an unprecedented event, (perhaps may be paralleled

to the show 'Dallas', that exposed who shot J.R.) millions of children across the united states are going to witness the new Power Rangers in their new form as 'Zeo Rangers', that are now going to be numbered six, and are going to be aided with new robots to help fight the foes of the world. Saban is a well

known philanthropist for the state of Israel and wants to start companies under his ownership for animation studios. It seems that this man who precides over a multi-million dollar company hasn't lost his roots and still has strong ties to his country.

- Alona Klarfeld

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