



RESPONDING TO TERROR

Carol K. Ingall, Chair

Those of us living in the United States have been inundated with solicitations that begin with “In light of the tragic events of September 11th...” The World Trade Center catastrophe has been evoked by my local symphony orchestra, the Jewish Home for the Aged, and Harvard University—three institutions whose fund-raising letters I recall among the many that passed through our mail slot. Each made a strong, although sometimes stretched, pitch: the solace of the arts at a time of dis-ease, the mandate to care for the less fortunate in a downward spiraling economy, and the need for education to banish ignorance, the root cause of conflict. So I hesitate before offering my own reflections, post WTC.

I heard about the tragedy from the bus driver who was ferrying me and his other passengers from Providence, RI to New York City. My responses were typical: initial disbelief, horror, then a frantic scurry to contact my children in New York. Once I was satisfied that my loved ones were safe, I repeated what so many of us were muttering: Now maybe the American public will appreciate what the Israelis have had to live with. For months we’ve been assailed with reminders of danger: police actions on the subways, reports of anthrax in the mail, and searches of our briefcases and backpacks. Our bridges and skyscrapers, once marvels of engineering and esthetics, have become fearful: too showy and too tempting.

Terrorists achieve their goals not only in the body count of the dead, but in the way they change the lives of the living. Samuel and Pearl Oliner, whose book, *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe* (NY: Free Press, 1988) is a constant on the syllabus for the course I teach in moral education, explore reactions to Nazi terror and coercion. The Oliners use the “extensive personality” to capture the qualities which describe rescuers: those who would empathize with the other and reach outward rather than shrink from involvement. The fund-raising letters I received, while never using the phrase, asked their recipients to demonstrate an “extensive personality.” However, acts of tzedakah are not the only way of manifesting the moral

qualities of resisting evil. We can also extend ourselves by refusing to constrict our lives and going about business as usual.

We are in the midst of planning an exciting conference with our Israeli colleagues, fellow researchers in Jewish education, and fellow sufferers at the hands of terrorism. We owe it to ourselves and to them to join forces and learn from one another. While the world has suddenly grown smaller, our vision cannot afford to shrink. Please mark your calendars for June 16-21 in Jerusalem and Haifa—*hazak, hazak v’nithazek!*

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PLANS FOR THE UPCOMING RESEARCH NETWORK CONFERENCE IN ISRAEL

Hanan Alexander and Howard Dietcher

The Israel Association for Research in Jewish Education and the North American Network for Research in Jewish Education will hold a joint conference in Israel, June 16-21, 2002. It will include four major components.

The conference will begin with two days of Torah study at the Melton Center for Jewish Education of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Participants will engage in a variety of textual learning experiences with some of Jerusalem's leading Judaic scholars, personalities, and teachers, taking full advantage of the resources that the Hebrew University can offer. Options under consideration include formal text study, chevruta study with Israeli educators, and study that incorporates land as text.

We will then embark on a pedagogic tour as we travel to Haifa, visiting a number of innovative educational institutions along the way and meeting with principals, teachers, and students at these schools.

The academic portion of the conference will take place under the auspices of the Center for Jewish Education at the University of Haifa, June 18-20. We will hear research papers, practitioner reports, and special symposia submitted by members of the sponsoring associations and others working in the field of research on Jewish education. Highlights will include a symposium co-sponsored by the Association for the Study of the History of Jewish Education on methods in the study of Jewish educational history.

The final day of the conference, June 21, will be devoted to the issue of the preparation of personnel in Jewish education. Participants will include: the Association of Institutions of Higher Learning for Jewish Education; the Centre for Jewish Education at Leo Baeck College in London; The Jerusalem Fellows of the Mandel School in Jerusalem; Machon Mofet, the central research and planning arm of Israel's 23 colleges of education; the centers for Jewish education based in Israeli universities; and the Jewish Agency's Department of Education.

The conference promises to be comprehensive and exciting. We look forward to seeing you there.



DEAR GRADUATE STUDENTS,

Where can you: Hear and discuss cutting-edge research in the field of Jewish education? Find a network of colleagues who share your interests, from fellow graduate students to senior academics and Jewish professionals? Partake in a friendly and supportive forum in which to showcase your ideas, explore theories, and germinate new research? Add your voice to a growing and ever-changing field, and help shape new directions in Jewish education research? At the annual Network for Research in Jewish Education Conference!

Whether you wish to share your own work, or respond to and reflect upon the work of others in the field, the Network Conference provides a myriad of formats, ranging from informal seminars to panel presentations. The Network is particularly interested in providing a forum for the work of new scholars, and works to create an environment that is particularly open and welcoming to students.

This year, the Conference will be held in Jerusalem and Haifa, and is sponsored in partnership with the Israeli Association for Research in Jewish Education, offering a unique opportunity to learn with and from colleagues from around the world. Don't miss this chance to participate in what promises to be one of the most engaging, valuable, and enjoyable conferences we've ever had! In this newsletter you will find more information on submitting paper proposals, conference registration, and program details.

We look forward to seeing you in June!

Meredith Woocher
Graduate Student Representative

THE NETWORK FOR RESEARCH IN JEWISH EDUCATION YOUNG SCHOLARS AWARDS

In 1999 at the Annual Conference, the Network announced the creation of the Young Scholars Awards. The Young Scholars Fund, established by the Network, is designed to assist graduate students through annual grants in support of individual research projects.

- * Grants will be awarded each year to individuals who are members of the Network.
- * Grants will be considered for amounts from \$500-\$2,000. Grants may be used for expenses such as: books and publications, travel, technical and/or clerical support, purchase of equipment and child-care.

To apply for a grant, please write a Letter of Intent, describing your research project and the progress you have made to date. If an abstract is available at this time please enclose it with the letter. In the letter, include the name of the program in which you are currently enrolled and the name(s) of those guiding your research. Describe how you would

RAV TODOT

Carol Ingall, Chair

For six and a half years, the Network has been blessed with the services of our able and eagle-eyed treasurer, **SHULAMITH ELSTER**. Shulamith has paid our bills, kept us fiscally prudent, and overseen several new ventures, including the establishment of a financial award to Young Scholars. Shulamith has decided to step down, passing on the ledgers to Wendy Rosov, her co-chair for the semester. It is rare that any non-profit organization has the good fortune to have a volunteer fill a key role for such a long time, insuring the stability of the organization and serving as a guarantor of institutional memory. We are most grateful for Shulamith's service and sage counsel and wish Wendy well in the position. Shulamith, enjoy your respite!

intend to use the funds provided by the Network and indicate other sources of funding (other than personal and family support) you have received during your graduate studies.

The deadline for receipt of Letters of Intent for grants to be made in the spring of 2002 is March 15, 2002. The grant committee will acknowledge receipt of all Letters of Intent and request further information if necessary. Please send all Letters of Intent to:

YOUNG SCHOLARS AWARDS
NETWORK FOR RESEARCH IN JEWISH EDUCATION
c/o Gail Dorph
588 West End Ave, Apt 2A
New York, NY
10024

Last year's award, the first given by the Network, was awarded to Ofra Backenroth. Her letter to the Network appears below:

*Shulamith Reich Elster
Young Scholars Awards
Network for Research in Jewish Education
c/o Hillel of Greater Washington
6101 Montrose Road, Suite 201
Rockville, MD 20852*

Dear Ms. Elster,

I would like to thank you and the committee of the Network for Research in Jewish Education for choosing me as a recipient of the Young Scholars Award. Studying at the Jewish Theological Seminary has been a very important factor in the development of my education and formulating my goals in research in the field of art and education. Your grant will assist me in further pursuing research and achieving these goals.

I enjoyed and benefited from the summer 2000 conference for research in Jewish education that The Network for Research in Jewish Education sponsored at The Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. I am looking forward to the next conference in Toronto. I value the commitment of The Network for research and innovation. Such a commitment by The Network allows education scholars to pursue research, which should contribute towards enriching Jewish focused education. I believe that there is much work that can be done to further the goal of enriching the Jewish educational experience in the United States. I wish to thank you again for your support of my research.

*Sincerely,
Ofra Backenroth*

NEWS FROM OUR MEMBERS

OFRA BACKENROTH wrote a chapter titled “Enriching education with dance and movement” for the 2002 edition of the *New Jewish Teachers Handbook*, published by A.R.E. Denver, Colorado

As the recipient of the Dr. Bernard Heller Chair in Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary, **DR. CAROL INGALL** gave the inaugural lecture on November 14, 2001. The title of the lecture was “Chicken Soup for Affluenza: Jewish Responses to Materialism.”

JO KAY was presented with the 2001 Covenant Award for Outstanding Jewish Educators at a luncheon hosted by the Covenant Foundation at the General Assembly in Washington, DC.

DR. HELENA MILLER has recently been appointed Director of Education and Professional Development at the newly merged Leo Baeck College-Centre for Jewish Education in London. A paper titled “Meeting the Challenge: The Jewish Schooling Phenomenon in the United Kingdom” has been published in the *Oxford Review of Education*, Volume 27 no.4, December, 2001.

WENDY ROSOV completed her doctorate in education at Stanford University during the summer. Her dissertation is entitled, “Practicing the Presence of God: Spiritual Formation in an American Rabbinic School.” She is currently working as Senior Research Associate for the Mandell L. Berman Jewish Heritage Center for Research and Evaluation in Jewish Education at JESNA, where she staffs the West Coast office of the Berman Center.

RABBI DR. MICHAEL SHIRE has recently been appointed Vice-Principal of the Leo Baeck College-Centre for Jewish Education in London, the newly established premier institution for Jewish learning in Europe. His new book, *The Jewish Prophet*, is to be published by Jewish Lights in February, 2002.



Research Spotlight

In this issue of the Network newsletter, we are inaugurating a new column with the goal of helping Network members keep abreast of the work being done by other members. In this column, a member profiles a particular project, line of exploration or interest, or other relevant endeavors in which they have been involved. If you would like to submit a piece for this column please contact Shani Bechhofer at (212) 284-6875 or shani@jesna.org

In my work here at the Davidson School at JTS, I have the privilege of being involved with a variety of exciting research and implementation projects. I would like to share one of these with the Network as part of this new column in the Newsletter. The Detroit community’s Jewish Early Educator Enrichment Program (JEEEP) is a project of the Hermelin-Davidson Center for Congregational Excellence and the Wm. Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education at JTS. JEEEP has an interesting and innovative structure. As part of JEEEP, approximately 200 Jewish early childhood educators from several synagogues (Conservative and Reform), as well as the Jewish Community Center, meet in school-based teams with a mentor on a biweekly basis for text-based Jewish study, with the goal of enrichment as adult learners. Research on this project has afforded me with an opportunity to combine qualitative and quantitative methodology, and I have learned much from the surveys, as well as the interviews and observations, that I have conducted.

This project has been an opportunity for me to bring together several strands of my research interests. For example, the area of social and emotional learning, based on work including Daniel Goleman’s *Emotional Intelligence*,¹ provided a framework for exploring the JEEEP experience. Initial feedback indicated that two major factors which make the JEEEP study opportunity meaningful to participants are 1) the feeling of having “bonded” with the mentor, and 2) the experience of drawing parallels from the text to experiences from participants’ personal lives. Both of these factors are easily understood within SEL theory. Further, the richness of the JEEEP program provides me with an opportunity to explore systemic and pedagogical issues as well.

As someone relatively new to the field of Jewish educational research, I find that my work with the JEEEP program encapsulates much of what I find exciting about this field. I can draw an analogy to a skier who has been skiing in one area, and is “tipped off” about an exciting ski run that he had not skied previously. I see the set of theories and methodology that I have learned as important tools – my skis and poles – which I bring to an area that is new to me, but where others (and the Network provides me an opportunity to learn from, and with, these researchers) have already been doing wonderful work. I look forward to seeing you on the slopes!

¹Goleman, D. (1995) *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books

JEFFREY S. KRESS

*Wm. Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education
Jewish Theological Seminary*

CONFERENCES OF INTEREST

THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TEACHER EDUCATION

Teacher Education as a Social Mission: A Key to the Future

June 23- 27, 2002

Achva College of Education, Israel

Contact: Achva College of Education

M/P/ Shikmim

78900, ISRAEL

972-8-8588092

www.conf4.achva.ac.il

Deadline for Submission of Proposals: January 31, 2002

CONVENTION 2002 FIVE PILLARS OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

Joint Conference of the JEA, RA, CA, USCJ and NAASE

February 10-13, 2002

Marriot Wardman Park Hotel, Washington DC

Contact: <http://www.jewisheducators.org/conf/>

THE CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDIES, UALBANY FIFTH BIENNIAL SCHOLARS' CONFERENCE ON AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY

Under the sponsorship of the Center for Jewish Studies of UAlbany, State University of New York and the Academic Council of the American Jewish Historical Society

June 9-11, 2002

University of Albany Campus

Contact and Proposal Submissions:

Prof. Mark A. Raider, Program Committee Chair

Scholars' Conference on American Jewish History

Center for Jewish Studies

University at Albany

Humanities 244

Albany, NY 12222

ALLIANCE FOR ADULT JEWISH LEARNING

June 9-11, 2002

DoubleTree Hotel, Skokie, Illinois

Contact: Jane Shapiro

FMAMS

847 714 9843 x302

jshapiro@fmams.org.il

CAJE 27: CONFERENCE IN ALTERNATIVES IN JEWISH EDUCATION

August 4-8, 2002

Trinity University, San Antonio Texas

Contact: Dina Rock

Associate Conference Coordinator

212 268 4210

www.caje.org

YORK UNIVERSITY'S FACULTIES OF EDUCATION AND ARTS

invite applications for a contractually limited term appointment in Jewish Studies. This is an appointment based in the Faculty of Education where the appointee will become a third member of York's complement of full-time faculty in Jewish Education.

The appointment will run for a year from August 1, 2002. Initial rank and salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.edu.yorku.ca/FacultyNews/jewishstudiesappt.html>

or email Prof. Alex Pomson at apomson@edu.yorku.ca

SAVE THE DATE!

17TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE



JUNE 1-3, 2003

HEBREW UNION COLLEGE

Cincinnati, Ohio

Conference Chair: Samuel Joseph

Program Chair: Jeffrey Kress

NOTES FROM THE 15TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Dr. Alisa Rubin Kurshan

After years of involvement with the Network for Research in Jewish Education, I had the honor of serving as the Program Chair for the 15th Annual Conference of the Network for Research in Jewish Education this past June at York University in Toronto. This was a welcome change from my day-to-day responsibilities as an executive at UJA-Federation of New York. Indeed, it was a privilege to dedicate time and energy to benefit the advancement of Jewish education through academic dialogue, cooperation and shared learning. In addition, it was a pleasure working with colleagues Carol Ingall and my co-chair Alex Pomson, without whom this conference could not have been such an outstanding success.

Over 100 participants from Canada, England, Israel and the U.S. joined together on the campus of York University for 3 days of intellectual stimulation. The program included the presentation of research papers on topics such as Jewish identity and enrichment, Bible education, adult Jewish learning, and professional development. Spotlight sessions sparked interactive dialogue around issues such as teachers as researchers and consulting in Jewish Day schools. The knowledge and expertise of all conference participants were evident during the Consultation sessions, during which those in the midst of working on research projects benefited from feedback, discussion, and the further development of ideas.

Another conference highlight was the Keynote presentation by Network chair and professor of Jewish Education at JTS, Carol Ingall. Pendulum Politics: Moral Education in Public and Jewish Schools explored the similarities and dissimilarities between the contemporary culture wars of American public schools and those of their counterparts, our Jewish schools. Also noteworthy were the dinner and study session with York University Professor Marty Lockshin at the local kosher restaurant and a special Graduate Student Session with Michael Zeldin, professor of Jewish Education at HUC-JIR.

I would like to thank all those that supported the conference including the sponsors and patrons, the steering committee and the paper reviewers. Our collective efforts enabled the 15th annual gathering of an extraordinary cadre of dynamic, dedicated, and passionate Jewish educators and professionals. Planning for the 16th annual conference of the Network for Research in Jewish Education in Jerusalem is underway. I hope to see you there!

CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACTS FROM TORONTO

Paper Sessions

GRAPHIC ORGANIZERS IN THE UNDERSTANDING AND TEACHING OF TALMUDIC DISCOURSE

Yaakov Amid • amid@macam.ac.il

This paper provides the theoretical background for the use of graphic organizers as a spatial learning strategy in general and specifically for the teaching of Talmud. It then reports a study in Israel of 127 high school aged subjects, comparing results of the use of graphic organizers to that of rhetoric organization such as chart or table. Amid's findings indicate a decided advantage in the use of graphic organizers, and point to a set of criteria for the use and evaluation of visual representation for the teaching of Talmud.

ART, RASHI AND BASKETBALL: A PORTRAIT OF A BIBLE TEACHER

Ofra Backenroth • ob60@columbia.edu

Qualitative and ethnographic research methods are used to study the practice of a Bible teacher who uses the visual arts to facilitate understanding of the complexities of Biblical text. Art as a locus of a coherent curriculum is investigated as providing relevancy to students' lives, creative expression, and authentic learning.

CHANGE IN TALI TEACHERS: TWO CASE STUDIES

Brenda Bacon • gbacon@h2.hum.huji.ac.il

Bacon develops portraits of two Israeli TALI teachers, one religious and one secular. Portraits focus on life history and the process of change each underwent in adapting to the TALI educational philosophy. The study reflects theories of school change which emphasize the importance of school culture, in-service education, and peer interaction in helping teachers adopt new programs and strategies, as well as in altering their beliefs.

PERCEPTIONS OF CLASSROOM CLIMATE IN AN ORTHODOX DAY SCHOOL: THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

Ian Cohen, Maurice Elias, and Jeffrey Kress • ijc3@hotmail.com, hpusyme@aol.com, jekress@jtsa.edu

This study explores issues of classroom climate in an Orthodox day school. Researchers present their findings on the relationship between components of classroom climate and content area, gender, grade level, and amount of reported television watching.

GROWING AS TEACHER EDUCATORS: LEARNING NEW PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

Gail Dorph, Susan Stodolsky, and Renee Wohl • gzdorph@attglobal.net, s-stodolsky@uchicago.edu

Researchers follow two experienced Jewish educators as they lead new professional development initiatives characterized by sustained learning activities that embody a "teaching for understanding" vision of teaching and learning. By describing

their growth and the challenges they face as they develop new ideas and skills, this paper explores the evolutionary process of professional development.

THE THREE WAY MIFGASH: FROM PRAGUE TO ISRAEL

Elan Ezrachi • elane@jaco.org.il

This study of a mifgash program between Jewish teens from Canada, France, and Israel examines the dynamic and methodology of cross-cultural Jewish programming. It follows the teens from their initial experience in Prague to their culminating program in Israel. Findings shed light on the complexity of the mifgash as an educational tool, and focus attention on the importance of considering language, group composition, readiness for meeting people of other cultures, variations in Jewish identity across cultures, and program management.

MIDRASH AS EXEGESIS: SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHING BIBLE AND MIDRASH

Michael Gillis • msgillis@jsc.huji.ac.il

Rooted in hermeneutic and literary theories in which the relation of words to meaning is regarded as always unstable, this paper makes the case for the study of midrash as a form of Biblical interpretation. Contemporary approaches to midrash scholarship are shown to have fruitful implications for educators in finding a more precise and significant role for midrash in Bible teaching.

JUDAIC ENRICHMENT AS A CHANGE AGENT IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITIES

Lisa Grant and Frieda Robins • lgrant@huc.edu, Frobbins@jtsa.edu

Teachers and principals from two different congregational pre-schools participated in a Judaic enrichment program. In one school, this positive experience seems to be having little to no influence on the school culture or curriculum, whereas in the other, substantive changes appear to be taking place. This study identifies four key factors that explain the differential impact.

THE TORAH OF TRUTH: ONE GOAL FOR TEACHING THE BIBLE

Barry W. Holtz • baholtz@jtsa.edu

This paper attempts to bridge the gap between literary and Jewish educational theory by exploring the meaning of teaching Torah as a repository of truth. Holtz suggests a variety of approaches to this goal and considers ideas from a broad spectrum of thinkers as he struggles with an issue that cuts to the heart of Jewish education curriculum.

WHERE THE PERSONAL AND THE PEDAGOGICAL MEET: A PORTRAIT OF A MASTER TEACHER OF JEWISH HISTORY

Benjamin M. Jacobs • ed.jewish.studies@nyu.edu

This portrait of a Jewish history teacher depicts some of the ways in which she combines her passion, compassion, sociability, authenticity, charisma, spirit, and soul, with her content

knowledge and teaching technique, to powerful effect on a trip to Poland and Prague. It seeks to identify the particular character traits and persona that make some teaching more engaging, more memorable, and more successful than other teaching, and to use this teacher as a model from whom other educators may learn.

FOR THE LOVE OF TALMUD: REFLECTIONS ON THE TEACHINGS OF BAVA METZIA, PEREK 2

Marjorie Lehman • malehman@jtsa.edu

A Talmud teacher shares her methodology for helping her students find a point of intersection between the Talmudic text and the world outside the text. Utilizing the historical-critical method of Talmud study, and in keeping with observations made by constructivist theorists of education, Lehman's approach seeks to inspire students to love the text as she does.

THE HEART OF THE MATTER: TEACHER SELF-DISCLOSURE AS A MEANS OF FACILITATING STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

Elliot Malamet • emalamet@better.net

Self-disclosure as a means of facilitating understanding has been increasingly utilized in various disciplines as a means of opening up previously unreachable areas of examination. This paper explores the possibilities and challenges of integrating teacher self-disclosure by describing and analyzing a research project using teacher self-disclosure in a Jewish community high school. Both positive and negative implications are presented.

THE INTEGRATED SCHOOL: A PORTRAIT OF CURRICULUM INTEGRATION IN A JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Mitchel Malkus • mimalkus@tbla.org

In this paper, curriculum integration is investigated at a community Jewish day school. A complex picture of curriculum integration as a cluster of approaches and school infrastructures emerges from the data. Curriculum integration is seen as a powerful process for assisting students to develop positive Jewish identities.

TEACHING FROM WITHIN AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY: WHY AND HOW – WITH AN INSTANCE FROM BUBER'S DIALOGICAL APPROACH TO ZIONIST EDUCATION

Daniel Marom • marom@vms.huji.ac.il

Proposed is a policy approach to Jewish education that seeks to empower practitioners to work within a guiding philosophy. The approach emphasizes the power of a larger educational vision to guide the design of teaching practice and curriculum, and to support rather than overwhelm teachers in their work. An example is provided by the author's experience delivering a lecture on Zionism to soldiers of the IDF, structured around his understanding of Buber's approach to character education.

A YEAR IN THE LIFE...AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FIRST YEAR OF TWO JEWISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Helena Miller and Michael J. Shire • helena.miller@cje.org.uk, michael.shire@cje.org.uk

This research project records the development of two new pluralist Jewish elementary schools that recently opened in the UK. The data collected reflects on lived experience through account and narrative, charting the unfolding story of each school as aspects of this first year are recorded and evaluated.

ASSUMING A NARRATIVE STANCE FOR RESEARCH INTO JEWISH TEACHERS' CAREERS: REPORT FROM A PILOT STUDY

Alex Pomson • apomson@edu.yorku.ca

Pomson argues that previous research in the recruitment and retention of Jewish teachers in North America was insufficiently attuned to teachers' subjective interpretation of their careers, and employed static analytical frames for examining career commitments. This paper reports on a research project which employs a narrative research method for the study of the career stories of more than seventy individuals who have graduated from the same teacher education program over the last twenty years. The research procedure is described and data is shared from an early phase of the study.

TEENS TALK ABOUT GROWING UP JEWISH IN AN INTERFAITH FAMILY

Evie Levy Rotstein • evielevy@hotmail.com

Whereas most research on interfaith families involves investigation of adults' reflective memories of their childhood experiences, this paper reports on interviews with Jewish teenagers in interfaith families, who are in the midst of constructing their Jewish identities. The impact of parental messages and community support are considered, as they influence attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, and the teens' choices about representing their religious and ethnic identities.

ISRAELI ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AS JEWISH EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY

Stuart Schoenfeld • schoenfe@yorku.ca

This descriptive study looks at The Arava Institute for Environmental Studies. While the Arava Institute does not think of itself as engaged in "Jewish education," it does in fact provide an opportunity for Israeli and North American participants to explore together, through formal study and personal interaction, the meaning of Israel and Judaism in their lives. The paper expands our thinking on the influence of educational institutions on Jewish identity.

FROM LIFE TO TORAH: JEWISH ADULT LEARNERS ON THE JOURNEY

Diane Tickton Schuster • diane.schuster@cgu.edu

The Jewish Lives/Jewish Learning Project documents the experiences of newcomers to Jewish study and identifies significant factors that promote adult Jewish growth. This paper is based on the analysis of follow-up interviews with four adults who had been interviewed as part of the project.

Qualitative analysis of the interviews yields five themes that may be useful for theory-building about Jewish adult development and learning.

AMERICAN AND JEWISH DIMENSIONS OF JEWISH ADULT LEARNING IN AMERICA: CONGRUENCE AND DISSONANCE IN THE CASE OF ME'AH

David B. Starr • dstarr@hebrewcollege.edu

Findings from the Me'ah program suggest that American and Jewish educational cultures share some important philosophical and phenomenological features. This paper explores the points of consonance, dissonance, and resonance that emerge from the Me'ah model, with specific focus on the tension between individual needs and goals, and the viability of the communities and cultures in which they seek meaning.

Spotlight Sessions

TEACHERS AS RESEARCHERS: BRINGING A NEW RESEARCH DIMENSION TO JEWISH SCHOOLS

Alex Pomson, Convener, with Avital Aharon, Shoshana Cohen, and Daphna Ross • apomson@edu.yorku.ca, avital@gemtekcanada.com, shoshana-cohen@yorku.ca

This spotlight session proceeded from an assumption that teacher research can make an important contribution to theory and practice in Jewish education. Presentation of some compelling examples of teacher research lead to an exploration of how best to support the potentialities in this form of research and how to avoid some of the political and ethical pitfalls that can subvert this work.

WHAT INFLUENCE, IF ANY, DOES FORMAL JEWISH EDUCATION HAVE ON JEWISH IDENTITY?

Arnold Dashefsky, Convener, with Harold Himmelfarb and Susan Shevitz • dashef@uconnvm.uconn.edu, shevitz@brandeis.edu

This session was based on a comprehensive paper that Dr. Dashefsky wrote reviewing empirical literature on the subject of the influence of the continued involvement of children in Jewish study on adult commitment to Jewish identity as measured by varying attitudes and behaviors. The session focused on efforts to move beyond the existing research, and through interactive discussions, developed some new lines of investigation at both the quantitative and qualitative levels.

DOING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: RATIONALES AND LIMITATIONS OF ETHNOGRAPHIES, PORTRAITS, AND CASE STUDIES IN JEWISH EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Carol Ingall, Convener, with Mitchel Malkus and Joseph Reimer • caingall@jtsa.edu, mimalkus@tbla.org, reimer@brandeis.edu

This session focused on how educational research based on interviews (the narrative school) and portraiture (a combination of interviewing and ethnography) have come under attack as "post-modern methodologies" with all the failings of post-modernism: idiosyncrasy, irrelevance, and sloppy interpretation. The discussants spoke about their use of var-

ious forms of ethnography and interviewing methodologies in their work and how they might answer their positivist critics.

CONSULTING IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS: MENTAL MODELS AND WHAT THEY MEAN

Michael Zeldin, Convener, with Lesley Litman and Jane West Walsh • mzeldin@huc.edu, lrlitman@world.std.com, doraww@aol.com

Based on five years of consulting experience as part of Jewish Day Schools for the 21st Century, an action research project by the Rhea Hirsch School of Education, this session explored alternative mental models for consulting. The session provided participants with a rich and textured understanding of mental models as alternatives to “consultant as expert,” explored the outcomes of consulting, and helped participants consider the implications of adopting multiple mental models for the training and preparation of consultants.

**LEARNING FROM THE MELTON MINI-SCHOOLS:
WHAT'S UNIQUE? WHAT'S GENERALIZABLE?**

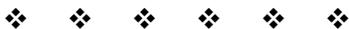
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Key findings from Dr. Schuster's research on the Melton Mini-School were presented with a focus on how the mini-school experience informs our understanding of the changing world of Jewish adult education. Discussion of the characteristics of Jewish adult learners, key elements in the Jewish adult learning process, and characteristics of effective Jewish adult educators took place in small groups.

INTEGRATION IN THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL: THEORY, REALITY, AND CHANGE

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This session addressed the issue of integration of Jewish Studies and General Studies in an average Jewish day school. The format of the session involved participants “solving” a dilemma of a fictitious Jewish school. The areas addressed through the presentation of the fictitious school included the philosophical, curricular, and sociological elements of integration. The focus was on broadening the definition and understanding of the word “integration” and the many forms it can take.



REFLECTIONS FROM A PRACTITIONER

Diana Yacobi

A theme that appeared to emerge at the conference was the importance of providing support for teachers and administrators especially during the first formative years of practice and development. Below is an overview of two papers which describe positive professional development experiences for teachers. What are the implications for recruitment?

Alex Pomson's narrative based research on what he calls ‘the career stories’ of teachers identified factors that appear to sustain teachers' interest in teaching. He pointed out that “teachers have indicated five primary sources of intrinsic meaning and satisfaction in their work”. These include:

- working within a bonded community of committed adults
- leading a professional life shaped by the rhythms of the Jewish year
- working in a culture informed by a shared language
- having opportunities for Jewish learning
- making a difference in children's lives; shaping the future; meaning making

With regard to teacher motivation, he stressed the importance of meeting both material and non-material needs in order to encourage teachers to remain in the profession.

Brenda Bacon's paper explored the change process that took place in two experienced teachers who began to teach at TALI schools. Coming with background from the Mamlachti school system, the new teachers needed to be enculturated into TALI's more modern philosophy and approach to Jewish education.

Teacher change and successful adjustment to the TALI system were attributed to:

- personal qualities in the teacher and openness to a new philosophy
- a supportive framework provided by the school:
 - peer socialization
 - mentoring
 - sharing
 - opportunities to learn the TALI system, philosophy and ideology
 - opportunities to study text and increase Jewish knowledge

Discussion following these presentations suggested that more formalized support should accompany the early years of teaching. With national attention focused on recruitment of the next generation of Jewish educators, designing, offering and funding a supportive induction process which closely links recruitment to ongoing training, mentoring and support may help to attract and retain future Jewish educators.

REFLECTIONS FROM A GRADUATE STUDENT

Benjamin M. Jacobs

As an aspiring academician in the field of Jewish education, I very much looked forward to attending the 2001 NRJE Conference in Toronto, and especially to presenting a paper at an academic conference for the first time. I had heard from graduate student colleagues that the conference was a convivial, responsive forum in which to share research, and that networking opportunities with outstanding Jewish education luminaries and professionals abounded.

The conference did not disappoint on either of these fronts. In fact, overall, I found it to be a tremendously positive, stimulating, and exciting experience. Highlights for me included: spotlight sessions on doing qualitative research, and on the influence of formal Jewish education on Jewish identity; paper sessions on teachers, teaching methods, and professional development; the keynote address on moral education in public and Jewish schools; and, cab rides, meals, and coffee breaks, which provided opportunities to catch-up and compare notes with old and new friends and colleagues.

I was also quite amazed by Carol Ingall, who was busy wearing many hats at the conference—as network chair, keynote speaker, representative of her institution, etc.—and yet managed to be accessible, as well as inspirational and plainly upbeat, throughout.

Finally, I was generally impressed with both the quality of research and the level of discourse represented at the conference. Actually, I was originally a bit wary of an academic conference that prides itself on its informality and collegiality, if only because I believe that knowledge is advanced by debate as well as dialogue. I was therefore pleased to see some lively exchanges develop in a few of the sessions. Moreover, controversy tends to point to areas in which work needs to be done. For example, the contentious “Integration in the Jewish Day School: Theory, Reality, and Change” spotlight session demonstrated, for me, the necessity for researchers in our field to do some major studies of integrated curriculum design, implementation, reception, and assessment.

With the expanding and intensifying interest in Jewish education research in the community as well as in the academy, there are some exciting prospects for future conferences. This may also be the right time to expand the net.

While the attendance of about 100 in Toronto was highly respectable, it represented only a portion of the many scholars, students, and professionals who are doing important research and work in the field. Although many NRJE members have told me that they cherish the intimate and familial conference atmosphere, I, for one, would have liked

to see a larger turnout. I am not suggesting that the NRJE attempt to model itself on large academic conventions such as AJS or AERA. But I do think the network needs to work more on outreach. All but a few of the academics at the conference came from a select group of institutions that have long had the highest concentration of researchers in Jewish education. It may behoove the network to reach out to education, Jewish education, and Jewish studies scholars and students from a broader range of academic settings. The network needs to be an open system if the NRJE conferences are to be as influential as they can and should be.



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Your membership will expire June 1, 2002.

Remember: In order to register for the Israel conference, you will need to renew your membership in June, 2002.

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