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Leviathan

Jewish Journal





LEVIATHAN

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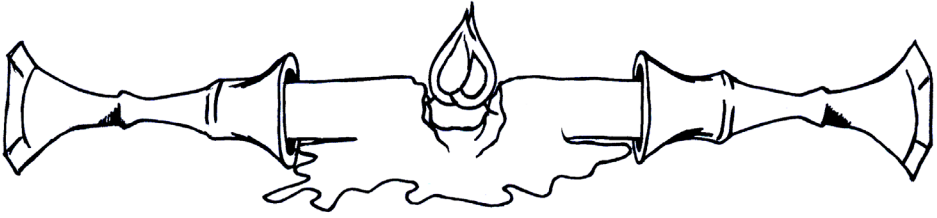
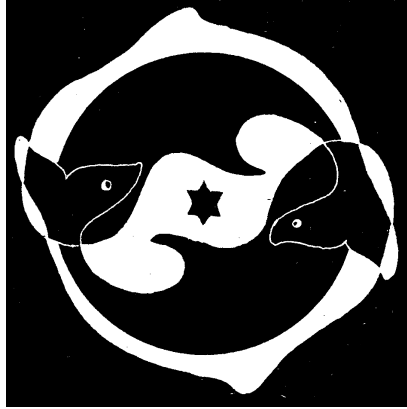


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Statement of Intent

Leviathan Jewish Journal is an open medium through which Jewish students and their allies may freely express their opinions. We are committed to responsibly representing the views of each individual author. Every quarter we publish a full and balanced spectrum of media exploring Jewish identity and social issues. The opinions presented in this journal do not always represent the collective opinion of *Leviathan's* staff, the organized Jewish community or the University of California.

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Letter from the Editor

*And all at once it came to me and I wrote and hunched 'til four-thirty
But that vestal light, it burns out with the night
In spite of all the time that we spend on it, on one bedraggled ghost of a sonnet
While outside the wild boars root, without bending a bough underfoot
Oh, it breaks my heart, I don't know how they do it
So don't ask me!*

--Joanna Newsom, "Inflammatory Writ"

Writing is the art of telling a story. A good story has a moral and the best stories make it difficult to sleep at night. A storyteller must challenge her readers and the best storytellers have a strong voice. You can find stories everywhere, in school, in newspapers and in governments. Right now you're holding several stories in your hands.

The tricky thing about stories is that they can change over time. This journal reflects the changing story of the Jewish community in UC Santa Cruz. For *Leviathan*, one place these changes emerge is in a predicament specific to a Jewish journal: because Jewish identity is often connected to religion, the word "G-d" is inevitably fixed in our printed psyche. Some of our writers choose not to include the "o," while others prefer to spell out the word in its entirety. This year we decided to leave the decision up to the discretion of the individual writer. Like stories, we believe that Jewish identity can change over time, and so it is in *Leviathan* that the art of telling stories and the changes of the Jewish community intersect.

In this issue, the *LeviaCrew* tell their own stories and in the process I have witnessed them each experience an internal revolution. What started out as a simple string of words and thoughts quickly transformed into a kind of therapeutic journalism. As you read this issue, you'll find the next legion of storytellers boldly marching into *ha'shana haba'ah*, the coming year.

L'chaim slugs,



Dear Abbyraham

Aaron Giannini

Dear Abbyraham is a column in which anyone can write questions or voice their opinions pertaining to Judaism and Jewish issues. Well, not anyone. Not illiterates. Although, they could get someone to write for them. But I digress. Feel free to submit your questions or comments to levianthanvoice@gmail.com.



Dear Abbyraham,

I've recently come to a crossroads and I'm not sure how to act. As a rationalist and someone who is thoroughly convinced that faith (belief without evidence) is an irrational, dangerous and divisive tool of religion, I feel that my instinct to address religious belief in an aggressively critical way may overwhelm my sense of empathy for other people. My tolerance towards their subjective worldview as equally valid to my own is overshadowed by my need for hard evidence to back up any and all beliefs. I feel I've begun to alienate my friends, many of whom believe in "fundamentals" like God, the human soul and the power of prayer, all of which are beliefs that I interpret to be manifestations of their desire to believe in something greater than themselves, or evidence of their indoctrination to their arbitrary religion from birth. I can't engage in honest conversations with these people; whenever I attempt to point out the assumptions behind their religion, or the irrationality of such beliefs, they get defensive or offended in such a way that turns me into the bad guy. Should I stay true to who I am philosophically, a fierce rationalist with little toleration for misguided belief, or appeal to my empathetic side, which tells me to allow people to believe in whatever they wish?

Sincerely,

Compassionate But Confident

Dear CompIdent,

Part of what makes Judaism so cool (and what makes us argue with each other so damn much) is the variability of Jewish belief. There are orthodox Jews, who believe the Torah is the literal word of God and must be revered as such, and atheist Jews, who think of it as a historical work comprised of superstitious stories and a now obsolete code of morality that is thousands of years old. One can subscribe to either of these beliefs, or anywhere in between, and still strongly identify as a Jew. What makes this kind of question difficult to answer, however, is that while tolerance is certainly a Jewish (and hopefully humanist) value, so is the questioning of beliefs and accepted standards. Culturally and historically speaking, we are the people of the book; part of what that entails is a critical eye for fallacious reasoning and blind assumptions.

The best advice that I have to offer is to find a balance. Systematically attacking every belief based on purely conjecture or without hard evidence may understandably alienate you from your friends who don't think in the same way. Not everyone has such a scientific worldview; just because one forms their beliefs based on feelings or on faith doesn't mean one's existence is less legitimate than yours. You can learn something from everyone if you allow yourself to be open to their beliefs in the same way you expect them to be open to yours. You may not be converted at the end of your conversation, just like they might not abandon religious belief, but your debate can be productive and honest while giving you a window into someone else's consciousness. In this way, rational discourse and empathy can certainly overlap.

There is also a time and place for everything. Sometimes, simply realizing you can't convince someone to accept your line of reasoning and moving on is the right thing to do. Other times, you'll have to choose which is more important: your relationship with your friend, or the act of convincing them (often fruitlessly) that you're right. To find a balance, it's often good to test the waters before you dive in. Not letting your emotions get in the way, challenge a friend's belief and see where it goes. Depending on their reaction, gauge how much of an honest discussion you can have without getting aggressive. Sometimes, you just won't agree, and that's that. Everybody's perspective is unique,

and while some friends are good for talking about the meaning of *tikkun olam* over coffee and kugel, others are good for discussions about rationalism and atheism over a fat ham sandwich. There's nothing wrong with either. Just be sure to keep an open mind, lest you fall victim to the "fundamental" way of viewing the world you so criticize. Part of being a critical person means questioning your own beliefs as much as anyone else's. Rationalism may be an unforgiving philosophy, but it's our capacity for understanding that makes us human.

Reason soundly; question thoughtfully,
Abbyraham

Dear Abbyraham,

I'm a Jewish girl who recently started a relationship with a guy I really like. One problem: my mother wasn't happy at all when I told her I'm dating a goy. This relationship is getting somewhat serious, but the fact that he isn't Jewish drives my *yente* mother absolutely crazy. What should I do?

Sincerely,
Mommy Issues

Dear Mommy Issues,

An upset Jewish mother? Can't help you there... Do you like this boy enough to change your name and start a life with him in another country? This might be your best option.

Or you could talk to her. Let her know that while it's serious, you may not have plans to marry this guy, at least while you're still in school. And even if you do think that's where it's headed, let her know that loving another person who isn't Jewish isn't tantamount to abandoning Judaism.

Plus, a Jewish mother has Jewish babies, and we all know that's what's important. Right?

Shalom,





Marietta & Pitsy
Sbani Chabansky

The Price of Freedom: The Gilad Shalit Prisoner Exchange

Karin Gold

On the night of October 17th 2011, I sat down at my computer and tried to find whatever news I could find on the release of Gilad Shalit. While attempting to find a news website that could verify the rumors of Shalit's return home, I called my mother to see if she had heard anything from family and friends. You know how they say that everyone is connected through six degrees of separation? Well, in Israel it is four or less. My mom's friend's daughter grew up with Gilad's sister. These few degrees of separation make it very hard to hear about something as monumental as this and not care or be involved. As an Israeli living in the US, it was difficult to explain this piece of history to people here. I would say something along the lines of, "Gilad Shalit is coming home! A soldier that was captured over five years ago is finally coming home! In exchange for 1,027 prisoners, we are getting him back alive!" The most common response to this was, "1,027? Is that even worth it? What's so special about him anyway?" Hopefully, in reading this, you will understand why this is an important piece of history, and why he is special. Not just to me, but to all of Israel.

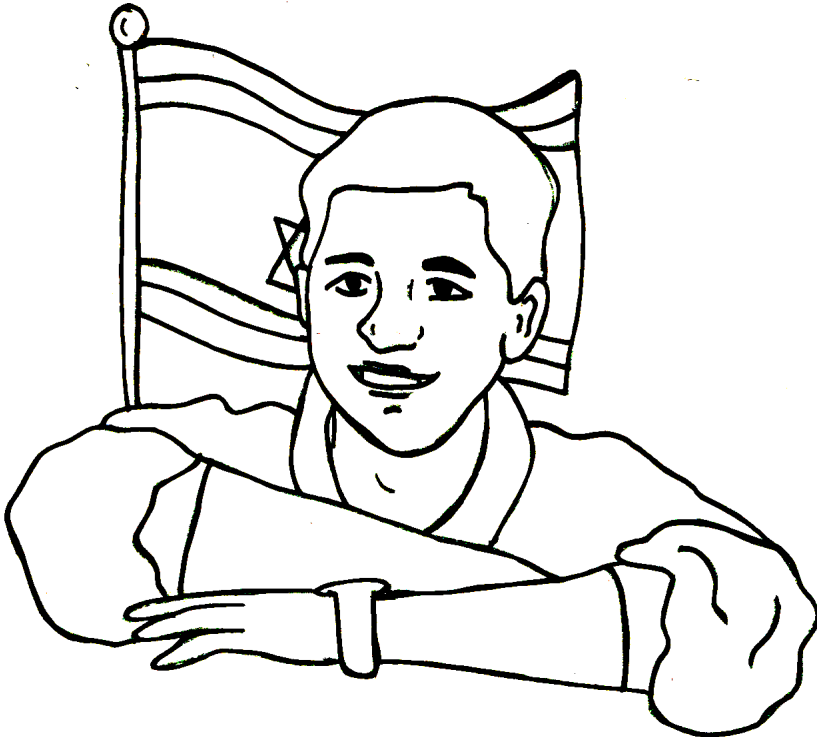
According to *Ha'aretz* and mfa.gov.il, it was early morning on June 25th, 2006 when Hamas militants crossed into Israel through an underground tunnel near the Kerem Shalom border crossing. About eight militants infiltrated an Israeli army post and attacked a tank stationed there. Four Israeli Defense Force (IDF) soldiers were in the tank; two were killed, one wounded and Shalit was taken hostage at gunpoint. In addition, two Palestinian militants were killed during the attack. After the attack, the militant squad made their way back into Gaza with Shalit as their hostage. This was the first incident of a live captured Israeli soldier since Nachshon Wachsman in 1994, who was killed six days after his capture.

In February 2008, Shalit's captors requested the release of approximately 1,300 Palestinian prisoners. Some of these prisoners were high-ranking members of the terrorist organization, Fatah. Initially it was unclear whether or not Shalit was alive. The only proof of his well-being

were three letters in his handwriting. These letters were examined extensively in order to confirm their authenticity. *Ha'aretz* also stated that during August 2008, Hamas periodically released small bits of information regarding Shalit's health. Israel continuously attempted to make deals in exchange for his safe return.

Finally on October 2nd, 2009, Israel received a three-minute proof-of-life video clip of Shalit in exchange for twenty female Palestinian prisoners, according to *The Jerusalem Post* and *The New York Times*. In the video, Shalit wore his IDF uniform and read a pre-written message urging the Israeli government to finalize the deals for his liberation. In order to prove his good health, Shalit was standing up straight. He was also reading an Arabic newspaper published on September 14th 2009, proving that the video was up to date. Between 2009 and 2011, the Israeli government and the kidnapers continued to negotiate.

With the help of mediators from Germany and Egypt, the Israeli government and the kidnapers reached an agreement on October



KARIN GOLD

11th 2011. They decided that a healthy Gilad Shalit could return to his home in exchange for 1,027 prisoners, mainly Arab-Israelis and Palestinians. Many of these prisoners were serving several life sentences for the crimes they had committed against the state of Israel. The first half of the exchange deal took place on Tuesday October 18th 2011. Israel released 477 of the prisoners while Hamas transferred Gilad Shalit to the mediation common ground of Cairo, Egypt. According to *Ha'aretz*, Egyptian officials medically evaluated Shalit and sent him to an interview with the Egyptian channel Nile TV. After the interview, a helicopter transported Shalit to the Tel Nof Airbase, where he met again with his family and the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu after almost five and a half years. It was evident upon his return that Gilad Shalit was overall in good health, albeit pale and thin. He now resides in his home with his parents in Mitzpe Hila in the Western Galilee.

According to *The Jerusalem Post*, this transaction wasn't completely accepted by all Israelis as only about 79% were in favor of the exchange. Those opposed were generally found to be the victims of the terrorist attacks that the released prisoners were involved in. Daniel Bar-Tal, a professor of political psychology at Tel-Aviv University told *The Jerusalem Post*, "Here we see the basic dilemmas between the individual and the collective, and we see victim pitted against victim. Gilad Shalit is a victim who was violently kidnapped, in a way that Israelis do not consider to be a normative means of struggle. Therefore, one side says, he should be returned at any price. But the families of those killed in terrorist attacks and the people who were wounded in those attacks are victims, too, and they say that no price should be paid to the murders. And it is truly a dilemma, because no side is right, and no side is wrong."

Whether this decision was smart or not is clearly up for debate. Some say it wasn't worth the cost of 1,027 convicted terrorists, considering their past histories. Many Israelis are worried that although some of the released prisoners were exiled from the state of Israel and the Palestinian territories, they will return to a life of terrorism. After all, 1,027 people can still be quite an army, capable of many things. Although the state of Israel took this into consideration, it decided to stick to its moral code and military rules and bring every soldier, dead or alive, back to their homeland. In an editorial, *The Jerusalem Post* stated, "No modern

government has the legal right to free terrorists in exchange for its own kidnapped citizens, military or civilian. Under long-standing international law, every state has a primary obligation to protect its citizens.” As of now, the real question is this: Is it worth it for the state of Israel to risk its citizens’ safety for one captured soldier?

The Israelis in favor of the prisoner exchange claim that it is only fair for the state of Israel to risk its safety for his return. In Israel, joining the military is mandatory for everyone at the age of 18 (with few exceptions). Therefore, the 79% in favor of the exchange believe that it is only fair for the nation-state to protect their soldiers’ precious lives. Because Gilad Shalit had no choice in whether or not he would fight for his country, Israel should be responsible for his safety. If enlisting in the the army had not been mandatory, everyone’s feelings would be very different.

Personally, I believe that every country should take care of its citizens. As an Israeli, it is comforting to know that while serving in the army, your country will do what it can to keep you safe; however, as a civilian, it is also disconcerting that in this exchange, you are not protected. Whether or not I believe the exchange was fair is quite the grey area. Having lived in the United States for so long, I do not face the same risks as the Israelis who still live there. That is exactly why my views are blurry, even to me. But even though I do not like the risks associated with the exchange, I do believe that the mere fact that a successful exchange occurred could mean a new, and perhaps peaceful start for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

When Gilad was captured, he instantly became the face of every IDF soldier in Israel. His name was the name of every child and of every teenager serving their country. He became the son of all of Israel. He is my brother, my cousin and my friend and I am so happy he is home. Before October 18th, 2011 the name Gilad Shalit haunted the homes of every Israeli and was a name filled with sadness, fear and helplessness. After that day, his name means a start of something new: a hope for peace.

Behind *Between Two Worlds*:
An Exclusive Interview with Kaufman-Snitow Productions
Shani Chabansky

It's easy to tell when you're about to really click with someone; they say just what you're thinking, they wear what you might wear yourself, everything seems to shout "new friend!" Such was my experience with Deborah Kaufman and Alan Snitow, the two filmmakers responsible for the hot, new documentary everyone in the Jewish community is talking about: *Between Two Worlds*. As Kaufman brewed a pot of peppermint tea, I felt as though we had already shared several groundbreaking conversations, the kinds that feel as if you have collectively shifted multiple paradigms. And as we exchanged an obligatory formal handshake, one glance into Snitow's brow-line glasses was all I needed to feel right at home in the office.

It's no small wonder then, that the stories in their "personal essay film" instantly transported me back to my family's Shabbat dinner table. During our interview, Kaufman told me that the personal quality was intentional. "It's the first time we've been really transparent in a film. Everyone thinks that documentaries are supposed to be a balance, but people who do documentary all know that every documentary has a point of view. Everything, even the way you edit to the images you show, is all a point of view. So it was to drive home that point, that we have a point of view, and to let people know where it's coming from." Documenting the fiercely contested identity crisis of the Jewish-American community, it is the element of intense intimacy that makes *Between Two Worlds* so powerful.

New Anti-Semitism: A Public Debate in the Jewish-American Community

Marking their second journey into Jewish subject matter¹, *Between Two Worlds* documents the debate over Jewish identity in the United States, particularly in relation to Israeli politics. One of the more volatile narratives in the film is an exploration of a phenomenon known as "new anti-Semitism," the suggestion that to question Israel's policies

¹ The first was their film *Blacks and Jews* in 1997.

or its existence is anti-Semitic. Kaufman and Snitow describe one of the earliest signs of new anti-Semitism in the beginning of the film: Two years ago, the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, founded by Kaufman herself, screened a documentary film about Rachel Corrie, an American activist who was killed by an Israeli military bulldozer while she was protesting the settlements in the occupied territories. According to Kaufman and Snitow, audience members from the political right and left began to argue over whether it was appropriate for a Jewish film festival to show a film critical of Israel. Among other things, the incident demonstrated that American Jews do not agree in their feelings towards Israel, a disagreement that is now a major source of tension within the Jewish-American community.

Gracefully waltzing into what has become a very sticky subject, Kaufman and Snitow make a noble effort at presenting the debate over supporting Israel in an open platform. As Gershom Gorenberg, one of the founding members of our very own *Leviathan Jewish Journal* wrote, “Snitow and Kaufman identify as politically progressive, but their most basic position is pro-nuance, pro-doubt... As you watch, you’ll feel compelled to ask whether you have ever pushed facts or questions aside to keep your ideals uncomplicated.”² Unfortunately, constituents from all sides of the debate often freeze banter by shutting down opposing viewpoints. Terminating discussion is decidedly not an objective in *Between Two Worlds*, quite the opposite. Using what social theorists call a “reflexive approach” for cultural analysis, Kaufman and Snitow disclose their personal histories in *Between Two Worlds*. In doing so, they honestly acknowledge the inherent subjectivity of the debate, extend credibility to all perspectives and keep the conversation flowing.

The Federal Investigation of Anti-Semitism

Taking a leaf out of Kaufman and Snitow’s book, this article is my own attempt to position myself within the debate over support of Israel in the US and to link the debate to our own campus. What follows is an abbreviated version of the conversation between myself, an aspiring journalist and cultural Jew, and Kaufman and Snitow, two artists whose

2 Gorenberg, Gershom. “Anti-Dissent Disorder: The U.S. Jewish community needs to be open to criticism of Israel.” *The American Prospect*. June 17th, 2011.

work documents the Jewish community in a moment of self reflection. As it turns out, I didn't have to look far to find the connection between the film and our own campus; *Between Two Worlds* directly relates to an issue I discussed in my last article for *Leviathan*.³ In it, I examined the recently opened federal investigation of anti-Semitism on our campus, arguing that such an investigation is not only unnecessary, but also threatens freedom of speech. Although the complaint responsible for the investigation didn't use the term "new anti-Semitism," its definition of anti-Semitism echoes the earlier controversy of the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, helping to clue me into the connection between UCSC and *Between Two Worlds*.

In my mind, the definition of new anti-Semitism falsely conflates being Jewish with being Zionist and creates an unfairly rigid meaning of what it means to be a Jew in the United States. Restricting identity is troublesome, particularly for young people who are still in the process of finding their place in the world. It is my belief that new anti-Semitism is guilty of confining Jewish identity to those who support Israel unconditionally in public, an especially problematic assumption for the growing number of students who maintain a connection with Judaism, but not with Israel. For my family and me, the situation in Israel is a lived experience, so it is impossible for me to separate myself from the discussion. But the thoughts and feelings of other students are just as important and valuable as mine. Even though, as a Zionist, it hurts to hear my peers and professors discuss Israel negatively, out of the discomfort comes new understanding. A public university's responsibility lies not in policing conversation, but in keeping it alive. Similarly, the creation of knowledge should not be a comfortable process, but should expose new concepts and challenge the way we see the world. The federal investigation of anti-Semitism is not generating a sustainable environment for those of us who refuse to adjust our beliefs in hopes of fitting into a standard definition of "Jewish." Time and again I evoke our university's custom of cherishing the alternative and of nurturing the unconventional. Although it may be buried under the waves of budget cuts and tuition increases, I still believe in the power of a critical education.

³ Chabansky, Shani. "Operation Jewish-American Scoliosis: Federation of Anti-Semitism at UC Santa Cruz." *Leviathan Jewish Journal*. June 2011: Vol. 38, Issue 3.

Curious to hear their thoughts on the matter, I brought up new anti-Semitism and the federal investigation during my talk with Kaufman and Snitow. As filmmakers, they offer a unique perspective in the national conversation on Jewish identity. After a nice schmooze about *Leviathan* (during which I learned that Kaufman is a banana slug), we gradually began to discuss their motivation for creating *Between Two Worlds*, turning to their views on the federal investigation of anti-Semitism at UCSC and finally arriving at the eternal debate over Jewish identity in the United States. In the interest of time and space, I have done my best to leave you with only the essentials.



COURTESY OF SNITOW-KAUFMAN PRODUCTIONS

On Motivation for Creating the Film

Kaufman: I felt that there was no affirmation in my generation for a diaspora-based Jewish identity that was secular and proud and that countered Hollywood stereotypes, so I was really interested in alternative visions. I've been involved with the issues inside of the film for a really long time, about who speaks for the Jewish community, and I wanted to present a forum that had different voices. I understood from going to UC Santa Cruz that there was more than one way of being a Jew. So that was my personal story.

Snitow: In the early days, the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival ran into a number of conflicts with the establishment of the Jewish community. Deborah and Co-Director Janis Plotkin invited the leading non-violent activist voice of the first intifada to speak after a film, which was called “Speaking to the Enemy,” so it was appropriate to have the “enemy” come to speak. That was during a period of time when the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Jewish Federation enforced a rule that no Jewish institution was permitted to talk to Palestinians in public, period. It was absolutely *verboten*. In our movie, we wanted to address these issues of ideology, silencing, and identity by taking a look at our own family histories and secrets. My mother was a teacher in Harlem and saw racism first-hand. She joined the Communist Party, but later became disillusioned and left the party. But she stayed pro-labor, pro civil rights, and she pursued her ideals through the Jewish community. To do that, she felt she had to completely hide her communist background. Her colleagues and the FBI never found out about her past. But it was important for us to acknowledge this hidden part of our Jewish history. We want viewers to know the complexity of the past so there would be no hidden agendas. We wanted to be up-front about history and about how it affects what we think today so we can say, “Look, we’re putting our cards on the table so we can have this as an open discussion,” taking that risk, rather than keeping it all under wraps. And the response has been great with people recognizing their own family secrets. We’ve had people come up to us after screenings and say, “Oh, my uncle was also a communist! My parents were communists!”

K: And other people tell us, “My grandmother worked for *The Forward* and my grandfather worked for *Commentary*.” Within families you have ideological splits, and sometimes they are the subject of raging battles and other times they’re completely submerged and nobody talks about it. But they all have an impact on who we are today. All of these “isms” are a legacy that inform some of the battles we have today over who can speak. The reason that we’re alarmed is that the rancor seems to be worse now. I mean, the rabbis fiercely debated in the Talmud, so this is part of our tradition. But now, the fighting seems really unproductive and out of control. Some Jewish community leaders are allowing this to

happen and in some cases even provoking the bullying of people they disagree with. So the film is trying to say that we've got to get back to a more respectful conversation.

S: We talk about the idea that social justice, activism and commitment are part of Jewish identity. There's a big debate among rabbis and historians about what is the ethical content of Judaism and what are the politics of Judaism.

Chabansky: Do you feel that you've changed the atmosphere by making this film?

K: The truth is it's been hard. Jewish funders didn't want to fund the film, some Jewish film festivals rejected it because it's too controversial. So we hope the film has an impact in changing the kind of debate we have. And the good news is that many Jewish film festivals are showing the film, and people are starting to book it on college campuses. We are now touring with the film with screenings sponsored by festivals, Jewish Studies programs, synagogues, Hillels, and JCC's.

On New Anti-Semitism and the Federal Investigation at UCSC

S: There is real anti-Semitism to be confronted in the world, and there are people who use being anti-Zionist as a cover for prejudice. But there are also important people both in Israeli politics and in the American Jewish community who have tried to conflate virtually all criticism of Israeli policies with anti-Semitism. This is a slippery slope. One Jewish Studies professor we heard explained the distinction like this: that traditional anti-Semitism has relied on fantasies of Jewish power. That even if Jews lived in *shtetls* and were poor and so forth, that they still controlled the banks, they were super-human, and that the Rothschilds had their tentacles around Washington and that every Jew in every *shtetl* was part of this conspiracy. This fantasy has been central to anti-Semitism and we still have to confront it today. But that doesn't mean that everything is the same. Israel is a state with a powerful military. It has real, not fantasy, power. You may object to the way people talk about Israel and there is anti-Semitism when people claim that Israel

controls everything about US foreign policy; again, the old conspiracy theory. But Israel is now a reality with an army that can defend it, but which, like every other army, can also cause suffering to other people. It's not just a fantasy anymore. There are people really suffering because of Israeli policies, not because of some fantasy that the Rothchilds are oppressing the Polish peasantry.

K: A lot of Diaspora Muslims and Arabs on campus are angry at Israel for real reasons and Israelis and Jews have to learn to deal with it and engage rather than withdraw. I don't think Jewish students need to be protected from that speech as much as they need to learn what the issues are and be able either to defend their views. We hope they will be able to defend Israel's existence even as they strongly criticize the occupation and settlements.

C: It's more of an internal thing, like who are we? And can we have independent ideas?

S: There's another element to this, too. Many of the same people who are trying to conflate criticism of Israel, anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism in order to initiate federal court cases are engaging in their own bullying. They say they are just trying to protect Jewish students who feel uncomfortable on campuses or in debates with Arab-American students of Muslim Students Associations. But freedom of speech *is* uncomfortable! We have to make a distinction between real threats and dangers to Jewish students and the freedom of speech that may make Jewish students uncomfortable and require them to do what we try to do in the film: to look into our own Jewish identities, histories and families. That's different from real threats of violence and incitement, which cross a line.

C: Some would say that speech can be violent. That saying something like, "Israel should not exist as a Jewish state" is threatening.

K: If you threaten to harm someone physically, then that is crossing a line. But speech that you disagree with, even speech that outrages you,

isn't necessarily a threat. People may say things that make us feel pain, but the solution isn't to call the cops.

C: And in my opinion, what comes after that, what comes after the pain can be powerful when you can say, "This is what I think" and informing yourself and refusing to be intimidated by either extreme.

K: The thing that's so disturbing about federal investigations on campus is that it's happening in exactly the institution most dedicated to the defense of free speech. This is why it's important for students to be exposed to the debate. People are suffering and dying in this conflict. That's a reality that should be confronted, not avoided. In our film, we're trying to inform people, not protect them from uncomfortable realities. The federal investigations we've seen are an effort to halt that kind of dialogue and education. It's really going so far in the wrong direction and it's such a waste of effort and money.

C: Is it possible that the investigation is helping bring Jews out of their shell? That in some ways, we should be thanking [the investigation] for bringing previously silent Jews out into the forefront to state their beliefs?

K: That would be nice, but I think that the investigations are just alienating people. We think what it's actually doing is poisoning the atmosphere so that most young people want to stay away from the discussion. We've had people say that the issue is just too "toxic," and they don't want to deal with it. And the truth is, I get sick of it too! So I don't think it's helpful. I think it's turning people off.

C: Off of Judaism?

K: No, no, not off Judaism. I think there's a lot of positive trends in terms of Jewish culture. No, in terms of Israel. I think it's going to create less attachment and involvement because the discussion is so inflamed and polarized. The middle is getting completely wiped out and turning away. The result is that the extremes get to call each other

names while more reasonable people on both sides are excluded.

On Jewish-American Identity in the United States

C: So what made you decide to do this now?

S: Probably because we felt that the debate over really crucial issues was being hijacked. And that a lot of people were intimidated, not just on questions of Israel, but also on questions of intermarriage and on questions of Jewish progressive left-wing ethics in history. It's always hard for us to remember how a film got started. What's your recollection?

K: I think all of these issues were really important to us because, as Alan said, a sense that the Jewish community was moving really far to the right and shutting down a thoughtful debate. So we tell a series of stories that are about that, but they're not all about Israel. It's not all about Israel, it's a lot about younger generation Jews wanting to have a more hybrid identity. There are a lot of Jewish kids who have one Jewish parent and one non-Jewish parent who want to claim their Jewish identity. For them, the idea of being exclusive and having a litmus test for who's a Jew seems to make the Jewish community smaller and less vibrant. We want to make it more alive. Although every tribe sets its own borders, those borders keep changing over time, and that change is okay. It can mean growth and innovation, rather than contraction and stagnation. That's what Talmudic debate is. It's about how to make Judaism relevant to new situations and ideas and how to assimilate new realities into the tradition. I think that's a good tradition and I think it's good *for* tradition.

C: Where do you think non-Jews fit in? Do they have something of value to contribute? There's this mentality that just doesn't translate to the United States. When you're part of an issue, you have a lot of opinions about it and you're very involved in it. So at what point do you go to an "outsider" and ask for help?

S: That was one of the first questions we had on the very first screening

we did, which was at the Toronto Jewish Film Festival this past May. A guy got up and he said, “I was the Catholic chaplain at Brandeis and I would not talk to anyone about issues in the Jewish community that you raise in your film because 1) I was afraid of being branded a Catholic anti-Semite or 2) I was afraid of being considered an ignorant outsider who should shut up.” So I think non-Jews do have something to contribute, and it’s really important that non-Jews feel the ability to participate and to ask questions and to raise the difficult issues and not be silenced. We’re planning to show the film to a Presbyterian group that’s talking about divestment because we want to be able to talk with them about why Jews needed self-determination in a state and the dangers of anti-Semitism in boycotting a society that for better or for worse is identified with the Jewish people. A lot of people, including Jews, don’t know much about what anti-Semitism is and we have to open the conversation in order to clarify the differences between views we may strongly disagree with, even detest, and anti-Semitism. We need to talk and educate, not shut down conversation.

C: The problem is that some people get very agitated when a non-Jew enters a conversation about these lines. Even if the non-Jew is very knowledgeable, it may not be personal for her or him.

S: Exactly, we’ve had this same question come up in Jerusalem, “Your kids are not going into the Israeli Defense Force. What right do you have to--”

K: “—to be part of this conversation.” I mean, this is what the whole film is about.

S: There’s a lot of delegitimization of the debate.

C: It comes from entitlement.

S: Yes, and disentanglement.

K: But it’s also coming from a strange place of not understanding that

we live in America, a place with a diverse population. A huge number of Jews have interfaith marriages. I mean, “those people” are not “those people.” They’re us! Our partners, our children are not “pure blood” Jewish, whatever that is. I mean the whole thing’s insane because we’re all interbred, technically. But if you live in America, you’re living in an open society and you need allies. You need to have really strong connections with people who aren’t Jewish. We’re a minority in this country, we need to have our non-Jewish allies with us and understanding our issues. We need the benefit of their solidarity and their experience and their own point of view. We need those allies in order to survive as Jews in America. So I really reject that argument about “they don’t understand.” Being open is a strength. Circling the wagons is just a defense strategy. There’s another element of this too: there’s a discourse that definitely intimidates a lot of Jews, both old and young, about whether they are “authentic” or “legitimate” or “entitled” to speak.

S: And even who is the greater victim.

K: We trivialize Jewish history when we say that so many different ideas are mere preludes to another Holocaust. This is an issue in *Between Two Worlds*. We’re in another country now. We’re in another century, and we can’t do that. It’s just unrealistic. So I reject that argument. We want to have people who aren’t Jewish come to see our movie and talk with us and give us the benefit of their wisdom.

Note: The above conversation took place just three months before the film was to be screened at UCSC. This article was published before the screening.

Check out the film’s website at: <http://btwthemovie.org/>.

Good Intentions Co.

Zora Raskin

COURTESY OF ZORA RASKIN



Zora Raskin a junior majoring in Community Studies and Feminist Studies. She is currently on her field study in New Orleans, working with a prison industrial complex abolition organization called Critical Resistance. The following words are excerpts from her blog, militanthope.tumblr.com.

I started Good Intentions Co. as a lifeline to the outside world as I threw myself head first into the sea of the non-profit sector. This country is littered with good intentions that in reality cause more harm than good. I intend to avoid this fate. Originally ripped from the title of a Joanna Newsom song, Good Intentions Co. is an attempt to point out the problematic professionalization and cooptation of activism in the world right now. Good Intentions Co. references the heartbreak, nuance and struggle of being an organizer today.

On Being a Women in the Occupy Movement

Being a female-identified intellectual means gearing up for combat on the daily. The Occupy Movement is not an exception to this. Bell Hooks, Staceyann Chin, Assata Shakur and Angela Davis; I remember these warriors and elders and try to let them inform and inspire me. I have currently been throwing myself heart-first into Occupy New Orleans. After a particularly jarring General Assembly in which female voices were continually silenced, including my own, I called a comrade from Critical Resistance who gave me an incredible piece of wisdom:

Me: I don't think I can keep organizing in this space.

Comrade: Tomorrow morning, are you going to wake up and still be oppressed?

Me: Ya...

Comrade: Well then, what are you going to do about it?

The moment you think you don't have any power is the moment you give power away. So here I will use my voice to channel my power. I feel that women's voices and folks of color are being silenced in this occupation and in this movement.

Let me be clear: silencing is more than speaking over someone. Silencing is not being open to the concept of discussing white male privilege. Silencing is scoffing and rolling one's eyes when someone is speaking. Silencing is questioning whether certain view points and emotions are rational or legitimate. Silencing is asserting one's power, intentionally or unintentionally, causing someone else to not be heard. It is not a surprise that this is happening in this occupation because this is the legacy that has been passed down to us, a legacy that we must each take full responsibility for if we hope to change. We all have the power to resist and change these cycles of oppression and it starts with the interpersonal. It starts with your mother, your friends, your lovers, your comrades and spreads. Listen to the women around you. Do not ask anyone to quantify or qualify their experience, but instead understand the invisibility of privilege and how those who are oppressed must be respected as the foremost experts.

On similar note, I am wary of the very masculine definition of radicalism that I have seen continually crop up in my organizing history. A definition where you must earn your stripes in the street and to be arrested means glory. Are we really asking a single mother who works two jobs to pick up her children and then put on a mask to face down riot police? For those without documentation to risk deportation in order to participate in live-streamed General Assemblies and highly policed direct actions? For this movement to become a revolution we must find ways for every person to resist, we must understand the privileges that allow us to be in these spaces and participate in direct action. So often "the most radical" folks are defined as those who will leave anything behind, stop at nothing to win. But so often those left behind are women, children and those who need liberation the most.

This political moment will shape our conversations and politics for years to come. To see thousands of people willing to be brutalized by the cops and forsake their warm beds to speak dissent to authority is a beautiful thing. But we must never forget where we come from and our

untold histories of oppression that play out in our daily lives. The 1% is a symptom of the structures that affect everything from how much your bank loan is, to how we speak and listen to each other in General Assemblies. The moment you stop questioning how you have internalized these power structures is the moment you lose.

An Open Letter to All Cat Callers

I recently had a conversation with a young male activist about cat calling and verbal harassment. He seemed to think that deep down women enjoyed this sort of attention...

Dear Cat Callers,

The idea that yelling at a women from across the street about “how fine she looks” is a compliment was a concept definitely created by a man. There is a myth that women need constant affirmation on their appearance and that all comments are good comments. Every sitcom, at one point or another, likes to play with the “feminist who is actually only concerned with male perceptions of herself” bit. Hilarious, undermining female empowerment just cracks me up. But I digress.

For all those cat callers out there, I am going to paint you a picture. It is a Wednesday. I wake up early to find that I am out of coffee. Disgruntled and stressed, I throw on some clothes and prepare to take my five minute walk to the closet cafe. Glancing in the mirror I resist the urge to wonder “what does this outfit says about me” and whether or not it is accentuating the parts of my body that pop culture has deemed as “problem areas.” “Capitalist, patriarchal bullshit,” I think to myself. Halfway down the block I am passed by a truck captained by a young male who feels the need to slow down and comment on “how good I look in that dress” and how “fine” my ass is.

Now here is me, trying to leave behind society’s expectations of me as a women and as a sex object and merely *exist* between the hours of 8 and 9am. However, simply leaving my house makes some men feel they have the right to instantly put me back in my place as first and foremost *a body*. Before anything else, women in the United States are evaluated by their physical appearance. Because I left my house, others think they have the right to sexualize me. These comments, however subtle, do not serve as compliments. They are tools to put me in my place. They

serve the purpose of reminding me how far we still have to go.

So what do I do with the man in the truck? I would love to stand in the street and loudly list how, in every way, he is a complete and utter misogynist pig. But do I? No. I notice that he has a couple friends with him, that I am alone on this street and that there are a few blocks between me and my destination. No, I keep my head down and keep moving.

These comments do not only serve to humiliate and disrespect me, they also make the male a threat. If you feel you have the right to comment in such a way about my body, what else do you feel you have the “right” to do with my body? This is not simply an oppressor vs. victim situation. These instances serve to perpetuate the power inequalities between men and women, which are harmful to men as well as women. I am forced to leave the house with a shield up judging all those who approach me. Men suddenly become guilty until proven innocent. Is this something you would wish on your daughter? Your mother? Your sister? How do these power dynamics affect those relationships? Just because you are the oppressor does not mean you are immune from the harm you are creating.

So no. It is not a compliment. On the inside I don’t “sort of like the attention.” It is a harmful, disrespectful, and intolerable practice that has been completely normalized within our society. While some may read this and still think this is just a small issue on the laundry list of worldly woes, I must stress how this “small” issue is the canary in the mine for a society that enacts violence towards women daily. Feminism comes last, the idea of gender oppression is barely understood even in supposedly radical circles. Just so we are all clear, this shit was not resolved back in 1969.

So this is a letter to all those men who think they have a right to comment, from a women who just wants to leave her house and feel safe in a world that I occupy with just as much space and purpose and value as you do.

Sincerely,
Zora Raskin

The Ten Trials of Abraham

Karina Garcia

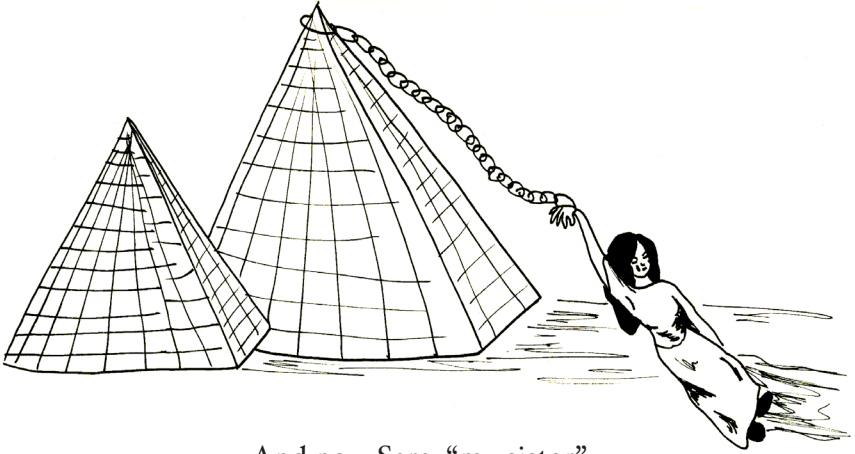
Illustrated by Karin Gold



The sorrow sinks me in
The dictate pushes me away
Ur, my home, no more I hear
I pass the night in fear.



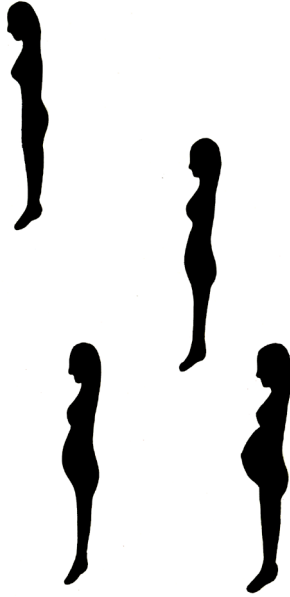
“Go Forth!” To Canaan!
Abundant land of milk and honey,
On faith I stand, but still
My pit hollow, not fill.



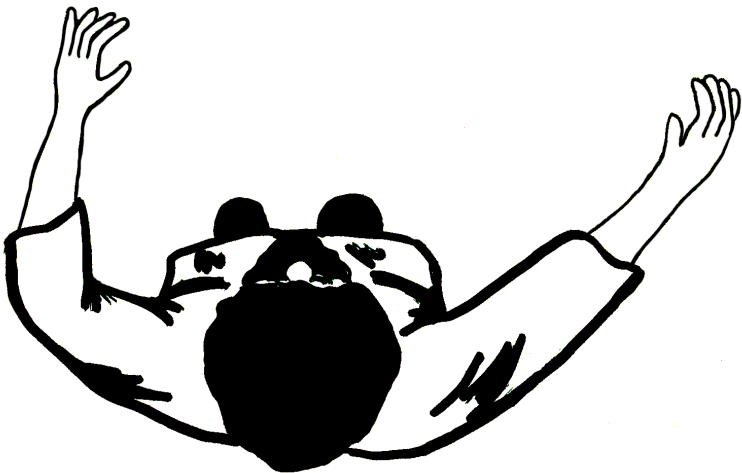
And now Sara, "my sister"
Fallen captive to the Egyptians
To the pyramids yonder
Pharaoh's wonder.



But now, to fight! Save Lot I must!
My sword, shining rod of death,
All four kings I shall take
Before the eyes of your awake!



Alas, dear wife a calm
Undisturbed by your barren womb
Heaven grant us one!
A child, daughter or son.



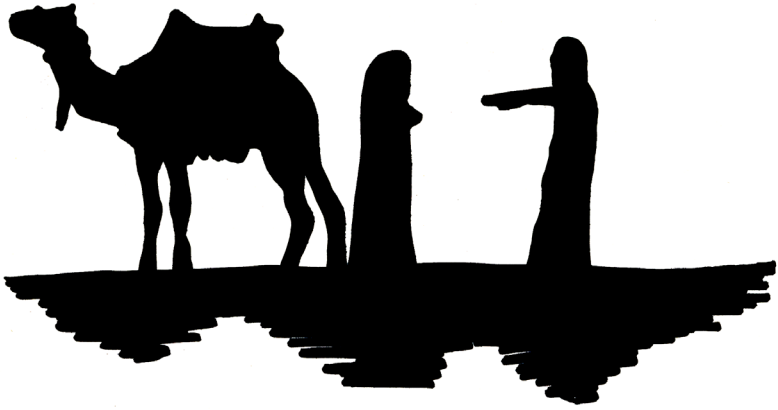
Pain I can take
Your words, LORD, I accept.
Circumcision my command,
But have You noticed I'm an old man?



Man of Gerar, Philistine king,
my wife your captive,
future slave to your obsession
Stop and adhere to His confession.



Out with Hagar
I want not
But Sara's jealousies I must oblige,
Though my affection I hide.



LORD in Heaven!
My dear son must I sacrifice?
Offer the lamb I shall,
Your will be done.



Photography from Israel

Rebecca Pierce



An Israeli Border Policeman shows his sunglasses to a Palestinian boy on Shubada Street in Hebron, West Bank.



Israeli soldiers stand ready as Palestinian, Israeli and International protesters march towards a settlement built on village farmland during a weekly unarmed demonstration in the West Bank village of Beit Ummar.

**An Open Letter to Israel Law Center:
Why we should worry about the hotline to monitor anti-
Semitic and anti-Israel activity on college campuses**

Savyonne Steindler

Dear Israel Law Center,

While aimlessly perusing the *Jerusalem Post*, I came across an article that directly relates to Jewish American university students like me: “Israel Law Center hotline to monitor campus anti-Semitism,” by Joanna Paraszczuk.¹ In this article, your director of American affairs, Kenneth A. Leitner, says that you are concerned about us. You are afraid we are “victimized by extremist groups promoting anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hate.” It is really great that you want campuses like my own to be “safe and secure for Jewish students, without distraction, intolerance, antagonism and most importantly, violence.” However, I am a little concerned about your methods. You created a hotline for Jewish students to call to report “anti-Semitism and anti-Israel acts” and are planning to use this information to take “legal action.” You are even going to begin issuing “report cards” for different universities, grading them based on “their commitment to providing Jewish students with a safe and welcoming learning environment.” I am all for feeling safe. I believe it is incredibly important that students feel secure at their universities! How else can we feel free to express our newly developing ideas about the world and our own places within it? Unfortunately, I do not think your hotline is going to make my campus any safer. By grouping criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism, implying that those who speak out against Israel are terrorists and attempting to prevent Jewish youth from being exposed to alternative opinions about Israel, you perpetuate the ideas that create a polarized discussion about Israel on campuses like UC Santa Cruz.

Anti-Israel and/or Anti-Semitic?

Several elements of your plan make me uncomfortable. Although the intended purpose of your hotline is to “monitor campus anti-Semitism,” Leitner states that the hotline is to be used for students

¹ <http://www.jpost.com/JewishWorld/JewishNews/Article.aspx?id=241931>

to report “anti-Israel and anti-Semitic hate.” You take for granted that criticism of Israel falls into the category of anti-Semitism, which is far from hegemonic truth. In my mind, anti-Semitism is hate or discrimination that is directed towards Jews because of their Jewishness. There are many arguments that liberal Zionists and anti-Zionists make against Israel that do not obviously fall into this definition. Israel is a nation-state and like any other nation-state, we should be able to question its policies and even its existence. Arguments to the contrary are reminiscent of early Bush-era patriotism which informed the belief that Americans who opposed the Iraq war were anti-American. When you deny people the right to voice “anti-Israel” opinions by labeling them as anti-Semitic, you elevate Israel to a transcendent position beyond reproach or analysis. Like any other nation-state, Israel is run by people with political goals, subjective ideologies, and fallibility. Pointing out its shortcomings does not have to be anti-Semitic, but in fact can be politically responsible. I resent that you intend to use the concept of anti-Semitism as a basis for taking legal action against political dissenters.

That being said, the boundary between anti-Semitism and aggression towards Israel is often hard to discern because hostility towards Israel and Zionism may *sometimes* be motivated by or lead to anti-Semitism. The fact that breaches of humanitarianism in Israel are given far more attention than those in countries like China, Sudan, and Zimbabwe is curious. And although the problems critics find in Zionism are also present in almost any other nationalism, this fact is rarely acknowledged. Anti-Semitism may be informing the belief in the particularity of the Israeli government and Zionism’s evils. I can also accept that sometimes resentment towards Israel can turn into bitterness towards Jews. Comments on youtube videos or news articles that deal with Israel quickly turn anti-Semitic, just as strong Zionist beliefs seem to transform into Islamophobia in many Jews, including some of my relatives. There can be a link between critique of Israel and anti-Semitism, but I believe that link is something slippery and speculative. It is hard to prove that an activist who chooses to focus on helping people living in the West Bank is motivated by underlying anti-Semitic sentiments. Unless an individual crosses the boundary of

disparaging the Israeli government or populace to speaking out against the entire Jewish people, I believe it will be hard for you to convincingly argue that a person who is “anti-Israel” merits the label anti-Semite and a law suit.

Another problem with equating criticism of Israel with anti-Semitism is the fact that since the inception of modern Zionism, anti-Zionism has been in part a Jewish phenomenon. In the same year that Theodore Herzl convened the First Zionist Congress to discuss a nationalist and territorialist solution to the problem of the persecution of the Jews, Jewish socialists formed the Bund, offering the very different solution of socialist revolution and cultural autonomy, and the historian Simon Dubnow, who proposed that there are multiple, migrating centers of Jewish life, was alive and well. Zionism was and still is one of many approaches Jews take towards understanding their Jewishness. You do not seem to recognize that some of the loudest voices criticizing Israel are Jewish. I have heard my friends and family refer to these anti-Zionist Jews as “self-hating Jews,” implying that Zionist inclinations are fundamental to Jewishness. Perhaps you, Israel Law Center, also deny these critics’ Jewishness so that you can easily dismiss their arguments. However, nationalism is a new phenomenon, and there were Jews before it came into being. It can even be argued that since modern Zionism developed out of a desire for the Jews to have a nation-state as all other nations do, it is not fundamentally Jewish at all. In your effort to protect Jewish students by shielding them from “anti-Israel” groups and behavior, you decline to acknowledge that Zionism has always been up for debate in Jewish communities. The kind of speech and acts you wish to eliminate do not only come from “student organizations that may have ties to terrorist organizations,” but from some of the very Jewish students you aim to protect.

Wait...You’re Supposed to be Fighting Terrorism?

According to your website, you are “an Israeli based civil right [sic] organization and world leader in combating the terrorist organizations and the regimes that support them through lawsuits litigated in courtrooms around the world.” That is all well and good, but how

² Israellawcenter.org

did your fight against terrorism bring you to the decision to begin monitoring college campuses for anti-Semitism? You give an answer to this question, but I do not find it very satisfying. According to Leitner, you speculate that there is a “connection between anti-Israel activists, organizations and activities in the US and Middle Eastern terrorism.” Even if this conjecture is justified, tackling student organizations that benefit from or sponsor terrorist groups is an entirely different project from stopping campus anti-Semitism. Hotline complaints from Jewish students will not provide you with the kind of evidence that you need (like records of financial and material exchanges) to substantiate your belief in a connection between terrorist and anti-Israel clubs on campuses. In creating this hotline you are either deviating from your explicit purpose of “bankrupting terrorism” or, without proof, are considering any persons espousing anti-Israel beliefs to be terrorists. Obviously, conflating those who criticize Israel with terrorists is problematic because by doing so, you undermine the validity of these critics’ arguments before even hearing them. In rhetorically turning these people into terrorists, you foreclose any potential for conversation and understanding while simultaneously justifying your efforts to silence opposing views.

Are Anti-Israel Ideas Really that Dangerous?

If, in fact, we consider that everyone who criticizes Israel may not be a terrorist or linked to terrorism, we may find that your proposal to take legal action against anti-Israel organizations or the universities that support them is unreasonable and even repressive. You want to make Jewish students feel safe, but perhaps exposure to people who criticize Israel is not such a terrible thing. Although I am not a Zionist, because I think nationalism is dangerous, I admit that I have felt uncomfortable around people who are hostile to the existence of Israel as a Jewish state. I have even experienced fear as I realized that the Zionists and Israelis these critics were disparaging were my loving and well-intentioned siblings and cousins. This dissonance between how some critics of Israel portray the people supporting the Israeli state and how I feel about particular Zionists brought me to question my beliefs about Zionism and Israel. My discomfort motivated me to think about

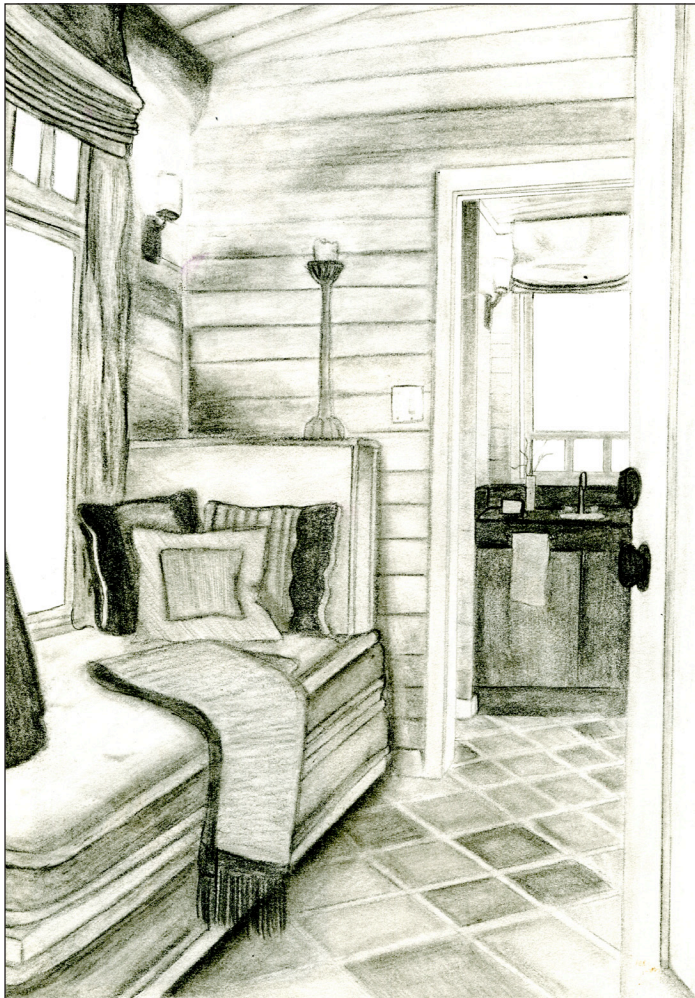
my own visions for Israel's future in ways I never had before. I had to form a working knowledge about nation-states, cultural citizenship, and the problems of a religious democracy just to feel at peace with myself. Confronting opinions that differ radically from our own is important. These encounters lead us through the often painful process of rethinking our assumptions. We can learn to reconcile seemingly conflicting truths, pick apart axioms we never thought to examine, or continue to stand by familiar beliefs with a renewed confidence in their veracity. If you, Israel Law Center, are successful in silencing the organizations that criticize Israeli policy and question Israel's claim to statehood you will be denying yourself a generation of American Jews that cling to their beliefs out of conviction instead of by default.

So What?

Why should Jewish students like me, who do not feel victimized by anti-Israel activity on their campuses, even care that you are setting up a hotline that will have little or no impact on their daily lives? Ironically, in trying to fix what you perceive to be dangerous criticism of Israel, along with the very important problem of campus anti-Semitism, you perpetuate the beliefs that inform an incredibly polarized debate about Israel. As I have argued above, you view Zionism as integral to Jewishness and associate "anti-Israel" politics with anti-Semitism, danger, and terrorism. In turning your anti-Israel opposition into anti-Semites and terrorists, you make compromise or a moderate stance impossible. Your hotline is grounded in the same conceptions of Jewishness and Zionism that I have witnessed in my family members and at UCSC. My father, an active participant in the fight to silence anti-Zionist groups, has told me many times that he hopes I will return to "our side," as if my criticism of some Israeli legislation and strategies has turned me into the enemy. Like you, he also believes that a person is either entirely for Israel or is the force out to destroy it. Similarly, at UCSC there seem to be three positions on Israel: fervent Zionists for whom criticism of Israel equates to anti-Semitism, activists whose aim is the dissolution of the Israeli state and the exile of the occupiers and the apathetic who are disillusioned and put off by the former groups and feel there is no alternative but detached disinterest. For students like

me who fall in the third category, there seems to be no middle ground. When we say how we feel about Israel, we are spurned from both directions, so we just try not to think about it at all. Israel Law Center, your hotline is part of a bigger problem. If you are really concerned about making Jewish university students feel secure, perhaps it is time to start a new project: fighting the polarization of the discussion about Israel by creating understanding and respect between people of different beliefs.

Sincerely,
Savyonne Steindler



KARIN GOLD

The Real Threat of Anti-Semitism

Antaeus Edelsohn

Here at UC Santa Cruz, set in the heart of a redwood forest, the air tinged with the faint aroma of marijuana and a general 'laissez faire' attitude, it is hard to imagine anti-Semitism being a current and present threat. That is the dirty little secret though; that is the overshadowed truth. From swastikas scrawled on university buildings to the Star of David joined with images of 9/11, the seeds of hatred and Judeophobia are clear to see.

At the end of the 2010-2011 academic year, members of the UCSC Student Union Assembly (SUA) denounced the formation of the Jewish Studies major and condemned the administration for allowing the major to commence, while the UC system is dropping Community and American Studies due to lack of state funding. This situation caused some SUA members and numerous other students to speak out against what they perceive as a 'Jewish agenda pushed by Jewish administrators.' What these detractors fail to realize is that while the state funding to the UC System was just slashed by \$500 million in response to the economic recession, the new Jewish Studies major is privately funded by independent donors. And this information isn't private or hidden, but rather quite accessible on the department website to anybody interested. It seems though some people would rather blame the Jews than find out the facts. Either that, or they don't care.

For everyone who has heard of UC Santa Cruz and its liberal and progressive views, it should come as no surprise that the university espouses the ideas of social justice, global consciousness and other civic-minded perspectives in the core courses offered to freshmen. With so much dedication to such moral values, it is hard to believe that the university, as well as individual colleges, so generously support programs events and speakers who delegitimize Israel, one of the world's foremost democratic, free and liberal countries.

Various UCSC colleges and departments have funded and supported speakers like Noam Chomsky, Abdul Malik Ali, Jody McIntyre and Norman Finkelstein, all of whom have publicly supported terrorist groups like Hamas, Hezbollah and the militant wings of the

PLO. Seeing this, one cannot help but wonder at what sinister game is really going on. These colleges and departments include but are not limited to: Cowell College, Colleges 9 and 10, the Humanities department, the Politics department, the Sociology department and the Feminist Studies department. When these colleges and departments sponsor and encourage students to attend events which blame Israel for the conflict in the Middle East, while denying or avoiding both Arab and Palestinian culpability, it is impossible to deny the biased bent. Such events include, but are not limited to: the screening of *Occupation 101*, the academic conferences 'Alternative Histories Within and Beyond Zionism,' and 'Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza'.

Similarly, even when the administration pretends to show its bipartisanship on the issue by supporting events which attempt to rephrase the conflict, like the recent screening of *Between Two Worlds*, they are in actuality belittling legitimate complaints which the Jewish community files and the oppressive situation which many students are forced to endure. Not to mention the deeper and more disturbing messages in the film, which imply that an adherence to many traditional Jewish values is antiquated and of little or no use to modern Jews. Such an obvious slap in the face of the Jewish community is hard to ignore.

This is not to say that there can be no criticism of Israel, Israeli policy or the like. That type of discussion has the potential to be constructive, educational, would certainly have a place on our campus and would not be considered anti-Semitic. The problem is when the criticism is focused on bashing Israel's existence or its Jewish heritage and culture. Even the United States Commission on Civil Rights has publicly stated that vitriolic attacks of Israel that go beyond the boundaries of pragmatic criticism are anti-Semitic hate speech. To deny and attack that aspect of Israel goes well beyond the borders of what is accepted criticism and becomes merely an assault on Jews and the idea of Jewish self-determination, thus falling directly under the realm of anti-Semitism.

We also see professors and lecturers who seem unable to contain themselves from jumping on the Israel or surreptitious Jew-bashing band-wagon. In private discussions with various students (their names are omitted with respect to their privacy), I have found some professors

who have strayed from their assigned subjects and class topics to denigrate Israel. When attempting to confront these teachers on their digressions, the students were ostracized or subject to slurs. Similarly, the students who disagreed with the erroneous and often fictitious claims faced verbal abuse. I have personally faced similar situations, from both professors and students. One particular incident that stands out was when the Committee for Justice in Palestine (CJP) held a rally for the destruction of Israel. Held in the Quarry Plaza, students and community members held signs and chanted slogans that called for the destruction of Israel and the elimination of the 'Zionist entity.' There were also students carrying balloons that had swastikas drawn on them and remarks comparing Gaza to Auschwitz. That day, the Quarry was steeped in one-sided hate. Despite this clear breach of campus regulation and protocol, the university issued no reprimand, formal or casual.

For the sake of clarity, it should be stated that I am not against free speech or the blind stifling of ideas. We live in a free country in which individuals have the freedom, within reason, to exercise their first amendment rights to the limit. Sometimes anti-Semitic comments and anti-Israel comments unfortunately fall under protected speech. What I would like to point out is that the University of California has rules, regulations and obligations which are more restrictive than what the first amendment allows. Thus, when the university or its representatives, departments and/or professors, make such biased and hurtful anti-Israel and anti-Semitic statements (implicitly or explicitly), not only are they soiling the idea that a university should be a place of rational learning, but they are letting down all the students they are supposed to be protecting. Simply put, the support of such events as those listed above would be akin to the university sponsoring a lecture by a leader of the Ku Klux Klan or some other White Supremacist group.

By now some are probably thinking, "Okay, so Israel is being de-legitimized, but that doesn't mean anti-Semitism per-se." That is wrong. I, as well as the other students mentioned, am Jewish. Each of us has been singled out because of our Jewishness, and by extension, our relationship with the State of Israel. We are singled out and called

names like “baby killer,” “racist,” “Nazi” and more. We are the receivers of malicious questions intended only to wound rather than inform. We are often held accountable for the breakdowns in the peace process. Just last week, an economics professor asked me, “How can one justify supporting Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, when his right wing politics are clearly a roadblock to peace with the moderate Mahmoud Abbas?” Without going into a long discussion about how Abbas is anything but moderate, this kind of question would never be asked of a pro-Palestinian student. Not to mention, it is simply unconscionable to think that even the most well-intentioned of professors would ask an Afghani student (I am friends with a few on this campus) about President Hamid Karzai’s recent statement announcing support for Pakistan over the United States. Yet it is somehow okay to ask these kinds of unfair questions of the Jewish students. When we look at this selective targeting, it becomes clear that Jews and Zionists are the only ones under the microscope. So where does this rate on the anti-Semitic scale? I am willing to accept the idea that not all anti-Zionists are anti-Semitic, but thus far, I have yet to meet one.

The list of incidents mentioned above, as well as many other unlisted incidents, does not start or stop here. These are merely the latest in what seems like a progressive campaign to subtly and imperceptibly teach anti-Semitism to each new crop of UC Santa Cruz students. This article is not the first to pick up the foul scent of racism and double standards: recently, a lecturer and long-time staff member of UCSC filed a detailed complaint with the federal government regarding the university and the administration’s lack of action and/or protect students. While the complaint predominantly deals with the university administration’s role in the rise and acceptance of anti-Semitism on the campus, a position which can be debated, one cannot deny the disturbing trend of anti-Semitic actions in the inter-student and student-staff incidents it recounts.

All of this paints a clear and simple picture: anti-Semitism is undeniably a clear and present threat, just as real today as it was over sixty years ago. In an article recently released by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)*, the recorded number of anti-Semitic incidents rose in 2010 over the tallies for 2009, with the largest increase geographically

occurring in California. We can also see spikes in anti-Semitic cartoons whenever Israel features more prominently in the news. Though the mechanism of expression has evolved and the methods of dissemination are less didactic than those of the past, the sentiments are the same; the same isolation of Jewish identity and the same ostracism to which Jews have been subject in the past. There are some who would argue that the anti-Semitism of the past is just that, past. However, the experiences and events related above tell a different tale. While anti-Semitism has certainly changed from the type practiced by the Nazi regime, growing stealthier and more oblique, it is most certainly an issue here at UCSC, the untouched skeleton in the UC closet.

**You can find the ADL article here: http://www.adl.org/PresRele/ASUS_12/6128_12.htm*



An Unripe Meyer Lemon
Alexandria Grace Vickery

Poetry
Robin Liepman

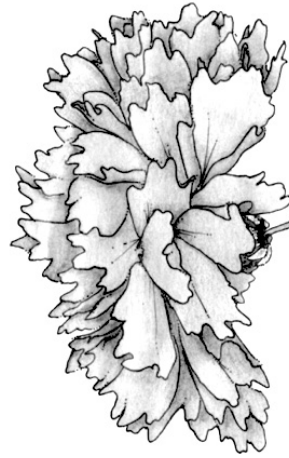
I'm not going to be able to pull this off (attempts to pull off face...)
It's unstable, strange, and I can't seem to find the purpose.
But I'm stuck with it. It wraps around me constantly,
producing unsettling and alarming noises from the wacky bagpipe
dangling from a one-way window
peering into the void until realizing that voidness is your own emptiness
and the swirling blizzard of the cosmos resides within
consistently blotting its escape to rein with the grand outer stars of
space,
...I'm not going to be able to pull this off..

Because when we squeeze together as close as humanly possible,
there is still an impasse, and as our eyes infinitely reflect each other's
shimmer back and forth, we try as hard as possible to merge our souls,
like two eggs waiting to be cracked and mixed together for cake batter,
but the dance towards union is only possible with this rubbery costume
to navigate, move and jive in,
So... I don't think I'm going to be able to pull this off..

For there are billions of amorphous colonies of bundles of trillions
of cells, bouncing around and off of each other,
spinning tops on the table of the universe, spun near the edge,
threatening to fall off the tippy top,
and that oceanic motion swirling and crashing and flowing back in
pushes and pulls at my every ligament,
stretching my stomach to the Earth, my heart to the Ocean, my legs to
Asia and my head to the Middle East
So... I'm all discombobulated and definitely incapable of pulling this
off..

Well, without this fleshy gangly jumble of gooey chords and
bulbous processing systems,
I wouldn't be able to try, for there would be nothing to pull off.
There would be no dancing, no struggle, no questioning, no words,
though I wouldn't suffer, I also wouldn't experience the feeling of being
overcome with joy, eyes watering from complete awe and bliss with the

one song universe,
being one individual while being one with the cosmos
consecutively united and autonomous, my ideal community.
So... maybe I don't want to pull this off.
[[Written at a meeting this morning]]



ALEXANDRIA GRACE VICKERY

Waking Up to Life

A dewey dawn day, rising chest stretched up to sunny sky,
portruding into the infinite, bursting beyond bright breaches,
casting cool shallow shadows upon the crevices of the
cosmos.

I caress the crevices of the cosmos,
circumnavigate the collision between you and I,
because when our stars burst together,
“there is no telling where you end and I begin.”
Endlessly looping,
swirling and swooping,
wopping, wooping,
hopping and hooting.

You bring me the joy of one thousand oranges,
bouncing upon beautiful bundles of blueberries.

My connections are strings, so I sew nets with my movements,
gracefully weaving webs and humming birdsongs
while roaring like lions and howling as a wolf.

I am constantly waking up more and more to life.
Thank you brain, eyes, heart, spirit, soul, and the whole.
We are whole, you are the One. Don't you forget, but it's fun to pretend.
[[Written on a very delightful morning]]

Shayndl's Search For Love





AT HER GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT, SHAYNDL WAS NOT A LESBIAN



♡ AND THAT IS WHEN SHAYNDL LOOKED UP AND SAW THE MAN OF HER DREAMS, AND HE WAS WEARING A BOW TIE ♡

THE THEORY USED IMPLIES THAT THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE KNOWLEDGE WE CREATE...

... FRAMEWORK OF OUR SOCIETY. JUXTAPOSED WITH A MARXIST POST-CAPITALIST VIEW OF...

AND A WEDDING RING ♡

The End

STORY: SHANI CHABANSKY
ART: ALLISON CARLISLE - 2011



PRESCOTT WATSON

Notes from Ramallah: The Downside of Independence

Prescott Watson

I am a junior studying Economics and Latin American Latino Studies. I traveled to Israel and the Palestinian Territories this September, during a tumultuous time in the peace process; it was my first time there. Leaving Ramallah on the last day of my trip, I had the following reflections.

September 30th, 2011:

In the coming weeks the United States and Israel will face an immense international quandary as they try to block a bid in the United Nations to grant the Palestinians special statehood status. I traveled to Ramallah, the de facto capital of a future state, just two days before the Palestinian National Authority submitted its bid at the UN in New York City. I spent several hours in the city's multi-day political rally for the unilateral declaration of statehood.

While I sat on a curb to rest, a Muslim woman wearing a hijab fed me pistachios and water. Her daughter, dressed like she could be from Orange County, translated our conversation. They wanted to know

about plastic water bottle recycling in California. Later, a poet pushed his name and phone number onto me, asking me to show his work to my editors. Everywhere I squirmed through the crowd, adults mistook me for Chinese and flashed the peace sign, while children greeted me with “ni hao.” Between speeches at the central stage, live music played and people danced in the square shouting “freedom!”

Three flags were ubiquitous: the red, green, white and black Palestinian flag, another version surrounded by a checkered pattern, as well as a yellow flag with the emblem of Fatah, the ruling party in the West Bank. Children flanked the sides of streets, handing out water bottles and the yellow flag of Fatah. We couldn’t understand each other, but swarms of them wanted their photo taken with their flags.

I was surprised by the narrative the rally-goers told me. They supported the bid for statehood at the United Nations because they equated negotiations with defeat. Much as the extreme political right in Israel will only accept a one-state solution, the majority of people with whom I spoke said that the final solution would be one without a neighboring Jewish state. Several were the grandchildren of Palestinian refugees who continue to live in the Al-Amari refugee camp near Ramallah. “We have patience and the Jews will leave. Then we will return,” said a man who spoke with me on break from work. A schoolgirl translated our conversation. “Israel has too many problems itself and can’t continue to exist,” he said. Their words represent a popular vision among Palestinians: a deterministic view of history in which a solution to the conflict awaits those who can ride it out. They see history heading towards a destination and they are simply waiting for it to arrive.

But the work the Palestinians have ahead of them is daunting; underneath the fervor over their independence lie the ruins of a Palestinian state. Because the government has failed to negotiate a peace and independence with its neighbor, its bid at the United Nations leaves vital national issues unanswered. The government is terribly corrupt and often isn’t trusted by its people. It is severed into two parts, with the more extreme faction, Hamas, often disregarding the other’s demands. The deterministic view of the peace process that I saw in Ramallah is blind to these realities. Both the Palestinians and Israelis

must make concerted efforts to create two viable states living side by side. The Palestinians lack adequate governance to maintain important infrastructure, including water management, electricity, education, police and defense, leaving people in jeopardy. And by unilaterally declaring independence, they risk nullifying all the progress made in back-door negotiations on everything from agricultural cooperation to hospital coordination.

Many of the young university students in the crowd weren't fooled by the nationalist rhetoric at the rally. Khaled, a student from nearby Birzeit University, was disillusioned with progress towards a viable state. "I don't know what's next. Nothing will actually change." We were standing just outside the crowd with a group of younger girls. Khaled is twenty years old, wore a polo and slacks and was badly deprived of sleep. He studies accounting and worries about job opportunities when he graduates in three years; but today he was at the rally to enjoy the dancing and music.

Among the thousands of celebrators, nearly all the rally-goers spewing vitriol were foreigners. Occasionally a boisterous, overjoyed Brazilian man would come by and shout "Free Palestine and fuck the Jews, fuck the Jews!" He forced the yellow flag of Fatah into my hands and held a lanky British man in tow.

Khaled laughed at the Brazilian, saying "and this is why there is no peace." When the hooligans came back and continued to harass us, I prompted them with the scenario Khaled referenced. "If it passes and nothing changes," the Briton says, puffing himself up, "if nothing changes we'll fight Israel again." The two disappeared through the crowd. I turned to Khaled, who looked at me and shrugged.



PRESCOTT WATSON

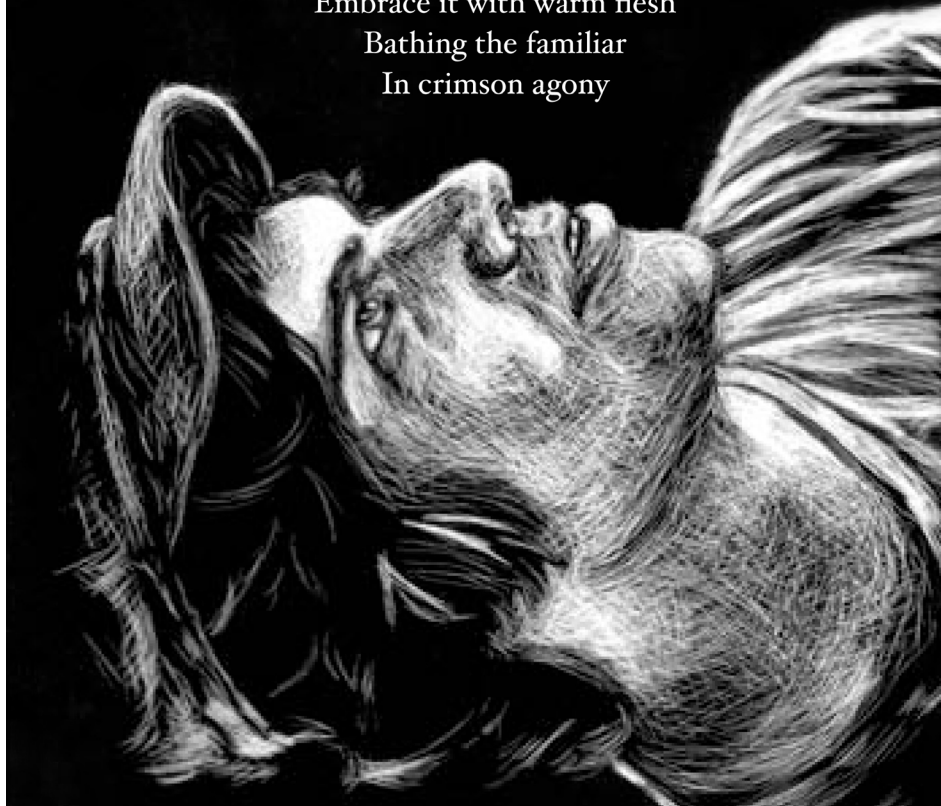


March of Mavet
Pamela Ong

For My Brother

Savvyonne Steindler

Delilah bears her shears once more
No longer satiated
She sees you
She wounds you, but
She does not kill you
Only a scar for every desire
You knew better than to keep
You step towards the blade again
It reflects the situation
Nodding acknowledgments
Of regret
You welcome it
Embrace it with warm flesh
Bathing the familiar
In crimson agony



LeviaCalendar

Ever wish you had a short, concise list of awesome events that are happening in our community? We thought it might be nice to provide you, our readers, with such a list. Enjoy!

November 2011

9th 12pm at Quarry Plaza. Occupy Education at UCSC.

14th 7pm at Stevenson Event Center. "Israel at the Crossroads" with Gershom Gorenberg.

16th 12pm at Humanities 1, rm 201. A Public Dialogue with Jean Baumgarten and Nathaniel Deutsch on the history and significance of minhag.

16th 7pm at College 9 and 10 Multipurpose Room. Between Two Worlds: documentary film screening.

17th 6pm at Humanities Lecture Hall, rm 206. Living Writers Reading Series: David Vann.

18th 7pm at Theater Arts Mainstage. "A Year with Frog and Toad."

18th 7pm at Chabad Student Center. "Impossible Spy at Friday Night Live" Shabbat dinner with Avraham Cohen.

28th 12:30pm at Soc Sci 1, rm 328. "Exploring the Jewish Dark Continent: Life, Death, and Ethnography in the Russian Pale of Settlement." An Anthropology Society Tea Time with Professor Nathaniel Deutsch.

30th 12:30pm at Soc Sci 1, rm 328. "Anthropogenic Fires and Landscape Management Practices of the California Indians of the San Francisco and Monterey Bay Areas." An Archaeology and Physical Anthropology Lunch Talk with Mark Hylkema.

30th 3:30pm at Muwekma Ahlone room, Bay Tree Conference Center. Writing Effective Resumes and Cover Letters Workshop sponsored by the Career Center.

December 2011

1st 6pm at Humanities Lecture Hall 206. "Living Writers Series: Student Reading."

2nd 12pm-4pm at Digital Arts Research Center. Digital Arts and New Media Open Studios.

3rd 10am- 11am Pacific Avenue. Downtown Association's "Holiday Parade 2011."

14th Klezmatics at Moe's Alley

21st Hanukkah begins

January 2012

7th 10am at UCSC Farm-Louise Cain Gatehouse. "Fruit Trees '101': Basic Fruit Tree Care."

13th 7:30 pm at the Music Center Recital Hall. "American Crossroads" as part of the Friday Night Live Concerts series.

16th 7pm at the Press Center. First *Leviathan* staff meeting.

26th 5pm at Humanities 1, rm 210. "What is a Reader?" with Alberto Manguel.

30th 7pm at Communications, rm 139. "Imprisoned in a Luminous Glare: Photography and the African American Freedom Struggle." A Visual and Media Cultures Colloquium with Professor Leigh Raiford.

31st 11am to 3pm at College 9 and 10 Multipurpose Room. "Winter Job & Internship Fair."

February 2012

8th Tu B'Shvat

27th 7pm Communications, rm 139. "What Makes an Image Ethical?" a Visual and Media Cultures Colloquium with Hagi Kenaan.

28th 7pm at the Music Center Recital Hall. "Across a Sea of Stars: Charting Distant Worlds, Other Earths" 2012 Faculty Research Lecture with Professor Steve Vogt.

March 2012

3rd 10:30am at Stevenson Event Center. Multicultural Career Conference.

5th 7pm at Communications, rm 139. "Visual Conflict of and in Palestine-Israel" a Visual and Media Cultures Colloquium with Helga Tawil-Souri.

8th Purim

LeviaFolk

Meet the Jewish Studies Interns! Sarah Edelstein and Hana Keefe-Guerrero are this year's representatives for the Jewish Studies program. They are interested in making the program available to all students, despite religious, cultural or ethnic affiliation. Want to learn more about the program? You can visit them at their office hours on Thursdays at 2pm at the Stevenson Cafe . They are now accepting submissions for the Jewish Studies blog. Email submissions or questions to korsherslug@gmail.com.



Sarah Edelstein is a Jewish Studies major, thoroughly enjoying her sophomore year of slug life in the beautiful community of Stevenson College. A Cardiff by the Sea native, her interests include reading, writing, taking long strolls through the redwoods, attending Shabbat dinners at the Chabad Student Center, drinking tea, and discovering the underlying sociopolitical messages in Lil Wayne's lyrics. Upon graduation from UCSC, Sarah hopes to spend time abroad before applying to rabbinical school at the Hebrew Union College.

Hana Keefe-Guerrero was born and raised in Berkeley in a Sephardic family. She attends a Jewish Renewal synagogue, one of the most liberal and least traditional sects of the modern Jewish world. Her connection with Judaism has been mostly cultural, therefore she finds it interesting that she have become so involved with the Jewish community. During high school, she interned at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco and is now a Jewish Studies minor. She hopes to attend graduate school in Berkeley or Los Angeles, focusing on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



Winter Jewish Studies Courses

Interested in exploring Judaism through an academic lens? Want to develop a background in Jewish literature, history, languages, or cultures? You don't need to be a Jewish Studies major to enrich your Jewish knowledge. Check out the courses the Jewish Studies program is offering winter quarter.

HEB 2 Instruction in the Hebrew Language with Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

HEB 5 Intermediate Hebrew with Doron Friedman

HEB 80 Introduction to Biblical Hebrew with Tammi Rossman-Benjamin

HIS 2B The World Since 1500 with Gregory O'Malley

HIS 70B Modern European History, 1789-1914 with Mark Cioc

HIS 178B European Intellectual History, The Nineteenth Century with Jonathan Beecher

HIS 185J The Modern Jewish Experience with Paula Daccarett

HIS 196G Modern Germany and Europe with Mark Cioc

HIS 196P Hitler and Stalin with Peter Kenez

HISC 125 Jewish Socialism in Eastern Europe with Barbara Epstein

LIT 61J Introduction to Jewish Literature and Culture with Murray Baumgarten

LTPR 144B Hebrew Bible with Nathaniel Deutsch

LTPR 102 Hellenistic Jewish Fiction with Daniel Selden

MUSC 80T Mizrah: Jewish Music in the lands of Islam with Avi Tchamni

YIDD 1 Introduction to Yiddish with Jonathan Levitow



LeviaPast

As the Jewish people, a huge part of knowing who we are is knowing where we came from. Here at Leviathan, we take a page out of our own cultural book and delve into the bygone days of our journal's glorious past to better our present publication. When the editorial staff of Leviathan found this particular article in our archives, we felt a pointed connection with our peers from 1978 as we read about their struggles with issues that are still pertinent and important to us. Enjoy this blast from the past, however it may apply to your present!

leviathan

february 1978
shevat 5738
vol. VI, no. 1

university of
california,
santa cruz



free
INTERVIEW:
Alan Soble

לֵוִיָּתָן

Editorial

The seas have been turbulent, but *Leviathan* has returned for our sixth fun year at UCSC. We are the Jewish student newspaper on campus and our function is to serve as a means of communication and expression for Jews and non-Jews on matters of importance to the Jewish people here, and throughout the world. We are distributed throughout the country by the Jewish Student Press Service, of which we're a member. You'll even find a set of *Leviathans* in the Hebrew University Library in Jerusalem. We owe a lot to the JSPS who provide us with a lot of nice stories and graphics; they are probably the single most important organization that has contributed to the growth and success of hundreds of Jewish student publications in the United States.

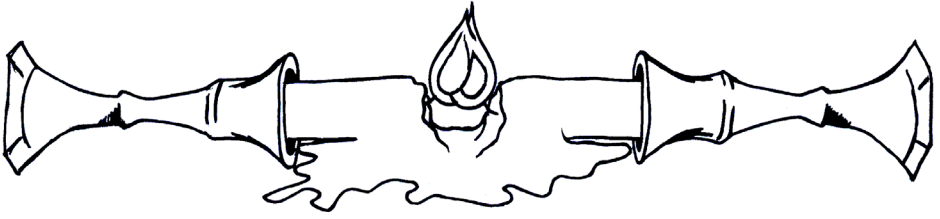
We became an endangered species last year after the *Leviathan* staff at that time published an editorial that was critical of one aspect of Israeli policy, the use of police in breaking-up demonstrations on the West Bank. The Jewish Federation of South Bay, that was funding *Leviathan* then, disagreed with the content of the editorial and decided to end funding of Jewish newspapers at UCSC as a result. Other papers, such as the *Berkeley Jewish Radical*, still receive Federation money. We feel it is better to have a free editorial policy that is not dependent on organizational funding. We print what we feel we have a responsibility to print...with no strings attached. *Leviathan* is now being supported by a few of the colleges, with a limited amount of advertising to make up the difference. We would like to thank those colleges and advertisers that have made it possible for *Leviathan* to publish again.

The staff of *Leviathan* this year is mostly new, and we are starting from scratch rather than upholding traditions of the past. Readers who remember *Leviathan* from last year will notice many changes in our look, content, editorial policy and quality. We are doing our best to publish a quality newspaper that is reliable, credible, visually appealing and fun to read. We take our responsibility to our readers seriously and we hope that you will help us with your comments and suggestions. If you have a talent you would like to share with us, please get in touch. We welcome any additions to our staff and can always use writers, artists, photographers typists, ad salespeople, and layout artists.

We will be publishing another issue before the end of the quarter in March. Deadline for all submissions is February 28. We will be laying out the paper on March 5. If you would like to help us, please contact Renee at 429-4374.

It's good to be back.

The *Leviathan* staff



LEVIACREW



Shani Chabansky has a way of neurotically complicating everything to the point of preposterousness. You can find her seated in the front row of an anthropology lecture, wrestling with social theory and rocking back and forth as if *davening* in *shul*. Win her over and you may find yourself on the receiving end of a decades-long bear hug and pumpkin pie binge.

Antaeus Edelsohn is a fourth year double major in Film and Economics with a focus in fourth grade Sunday School over the hill. After a two quarter sabbatical spent gefilte fishing, he has returned to *Leviathan* and the realm of talking snakes, giant golems and matzoh-ball soup for the Jewish soul.



Karina Garcia spends half her time convincing herself she is the reincarnation of Charles Bukowski, the other half actually being him. So “don’t try.”

Although **Aaron Giannini**'s raspy voice is often the object of female affection, this Italian stallion prefers to spend the majority of his time debating the existence of God with his Dog, Lola. You can find him tutoring at Stevenson Cafe, bent over an essay with a red pen and a cup of coffee. For him, objectivity is close, but no shofar!



During her spare time, **Karin Gold** plays bluegrass cello, builds large suspension bridges in her backyard and treads water for three days in a row. Amazingly, she can bake thirty-minute brownies in twenty minutes, can make children trust her and for the past 19 years has been trying to grow a mustache.

Oren Gotesman enjoys fighting off the endless hordes of zombies in the Press Center. Besides sending the shambling corpses back to hell, he enjoys drinking hot chocolate and editing articles of his fellow staff. He will have an important article coming out next quarter which is sure to earn him that long sought after promotion from “Sass Muffin” to “Sass Danish.”





Savyonne Steindler is a senior majoring in anthropology and Jewish studies. Although she is not a cultural, religious or Zionist Jew, she enjoys relating to her Jewishness through an academic lens. In her free time she teaches rodents tricks.

Alexandria Grace Vickery is a million turtles standing on top of one another. She can see as far as light can travel and figure out a Rubik's Cube in less time than it takes to read the Leviathan. If you listen for the first rain and then walk out to the woods, she'll be there hunting for mushrooms with feet bare in the soil. She's in love with the old growth forest and is a patriotic American.



Prescott Watson beep beep boop boop Jews beep boop.



Leviathan Jewish Journal is a student-run, quarterly publication at UC Santa Cruz approaching its 40th anniversary. We publish articles on Jewish culture and politics, as well as arts and commentary of interest to our community.

Leviathan would like to thank Community Printers for their continued support. We extend our warmest appreciation to Susan Watrous and the staff of the UCSC Press Center.

All UCSC students are welcome to join Leviathan Staff or contribute to the publication.

Send letters to:

Leviathan Jewish Journal
UCSC Press Center
1156 High St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Find us on the Web:

leviathanjewishjournal.com
leviathanvoice@gmail.com



