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Letter from the Editor

As my thoughts turn inward, both my heart and mind swell with pride and admiration for the group of individuals I have come to know over the past quarter. We are a dedicated and passionate group, willing to engage in challenging and sometimes uncomfortable dialogue. Internal tension creates pressure, but like a crooked spine in need of muscular support, our unique and separate ideologies lent integrity to the Jewish voice of UCSC.

In an effort to stimulate meaningful writing, Leviathan chose to free ourselves from the constraints of a specific theme. Echoing the words of last quarter, “art is news” informs the artful format of the journal and reflects our collective style. I am continually astounded by the staff’s expertise; there is no end to our ability to create.

With their potential to endure the test of time, words have an everlasting nature. Yet they maintain a transient quality, intangible in reality: words do not exist outside of themselves. This dual infusion of contradictory attributes is extremely powerful, even dangerous. A truly seasoned writer is an artist—can sculpt an idea, using words as clay and audience as kiln. This is the process that changes the world. Although I consider myself a die-hard skeptic (but never a cynic), I place all of my faith in the capacity of words to paint our colorful world with indelible ink.

Lechaim slugs,

Shani Chabansky

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Jewish Studies: The Big Mentsch on Campus

Shani Chabansky

Sit in Stevenson Café with a bagel and cream cheese, coffee and anything written by Jonathan Safran Foer and I guarantee that within about twenty minutes you'll have one of the newly declared Jewish Studies majors dripping all over you with questions about identity or objectivity. Yes, there's a new major on campus and although it's still small in numbers, it's big in pride! Previously offered as a minor, Jewish Studies is now officially included among the sixty-three majors available to undergraduates at UCSC.

Co-chaired by English and Comparative Literature Professor Murray Baumgarten and Literature and History Professor Nathaniel Deutsch, the program has been under construction for over a decade. In order to create the major, Deutsch and Baumgarten assembled a proposal: a list of courses and faculty, a survey of resources on campus, statements about student interest and an intellectual justification for the major. According to Deutsch, the major is comprised of "people seeking support for things that have been organically driven," and that the major exists thanks to a "labor of love on the part of the faculty, student and intellectual interest." However, it is clear that generous support from foundations and donors among them, Anne Neufeld-Levin, the Helen Diller Family Endowment, the Koret Foundation, the David B. Gold Foundation, the Jewish Community Federation Endowment Fund, the Jim Joseph Foundation, and the Foundation for Jewish Culture has also played a significant role in the new major's existence. This takes care of the proposal's list of courses, faculty members, student interest and available resources, but what of intellectual justification?

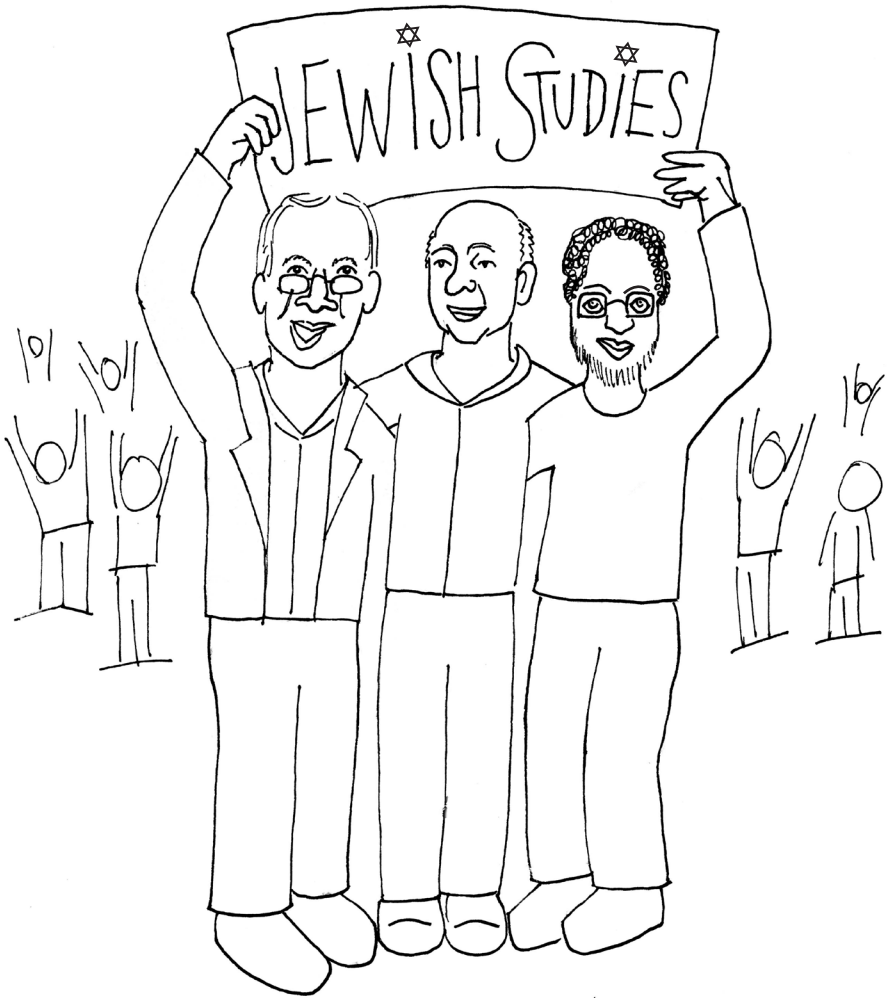
Professor Baumgarten's essay entitled "Jewish Studies: Attesting to the Importance of the Jewish Imagination in Shaping the Modern World," addresses the program's intellectual justification by asking the reader to imagine our society without the achievements of modern Jewish scholarship. He writes, "I do not think it is possible to be an educated human being at the beginning of the 21st century without some knowledge of the history and culture of the Jewish people." How's that for intellectual justification?

Indeed, academia is a terrific place to interrogate what it means to be Jewish; the program offers Jewish students a new way to feel connected to Judaism. One such student is Savyonne Steindler, a junior majoring in Cultural Anthropology and Jewish Studies. “I chose to major in Jewish Studies at UCSC because the curriculum allows me to relate to my Jewishness outside of a religious context,” she said, “and in fact in a way that is impossible in a religious context. The program embraces a plurality of perspectives that problematizes some of the basic assumptions that had previously shaped my Jewish education.” Steindler illuminates the most beautiful aspect of the program: it is an alternative way to create Jewish identity.

While Jewish students may find significance in an exploration of their personal narrative, other students will find value in an investigation of Jewish cultural framework. Taught by Professor Deutsch, this year marks the debut of the core course of the Jewish Studies program: “Jewish Studies 101: Methods and Approaches to Jewish Studies.” Sable Yemane, a freshman majoring in Computer Engineering, enrolled in the course in order to learn about Jewish history. She was surprised to find that the course was, in fact, the history of Jewish history, also known as Jewish historiography. Despite her initial shock, Yemane found satisfaction in the course. “I like that it is a course about the problematic,” Yemane said. “I like the inclusiveness of the topic and how some of the students really analyze and understand the gist of [the material].” Emphasizing the multidisciplinary nature of Jewish Studies, the course is useful for students interested in epistemology, methodology or any brand of cultural analysis.

Widening the scope of the program to the impact upon our campus community is slightly problematic; one would be hard-pressed to find an article announcing the new Jewish Studies major in recent student publications. Overshadowed by articles on the Kerr Hall aftermath, the graffiti threats of violence in Social Sciences and the recent sacking of the American Studies and Community Studies majors, news of the Jewish Studies major made only a brief appearance in a short article in *City on a Hill Press* during the summer. Yet it is not a coincidence that the introduction of the Jewish Studies major and the dissolution of the American Studies and Community Studies majors occurred simultane-

ously: both show the impact of budget cuts and tuition hikes. Thanks to private funding, the Jewish Studies major is unlike American Studies and Community Studies because it is not bound by the school's budget. Recent economic pressures created the sense of urgency required to finally propel the introduction of the Jewish Studies major. Let us hope that the aforementioned majors will find similar support, because whether the program is called American, Community, Jewish or Yellow Studies is irrelevant; each program helps to form the higher education we all hope to achieve as students at this university.



Addressing Israel's Water Crisis

Alexandria Vickery

The more man develops and the more his emotions and awareness become deeper and broader, and his knowledge becomes richer, he is in greater need of direct attachment inside of nature. To suckle directly from this vast global experience.

-- A.D. Gordon, 1951

On February 7, Alon Tal, a Ben Gurion University Desert Ecology professor, founder of the Israeli Green Party, and author of “Pollution in a Promised Land,” visited UC Santa Cruz to give a talk on the environmental consequences of limited water resources in Israel, a crisis compounded by the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and potentially the subject of future dispute¹. He described Israel as possessing environmental assets well worth preserving, and suggested that the land and its preservation could be the source of harmony in the midst of the conflict. Ecology and environmentalism are binding ties not only of the people to the land, but also of the people to each other—it creates a common natural history and remarkable heritage, and in taking care of it, the peace process can start. In a situation where improved environmental conditions are reliant on a State’s neighbors as much as the State itself, the collective and communal efforts of everyone in the region are necessary for progress. The current water shortage in Israel is an example of an issue beyond personal politics and affiliation: it is a common, human, environmental problem in which the people need the land and the land needs the people, a situation where pragmatism and cooperation are more effective than dissension and strife.

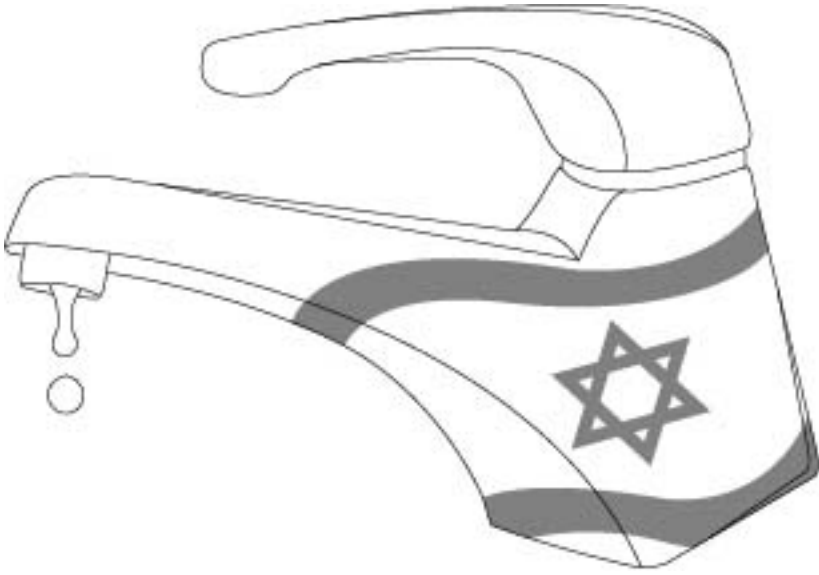
A.D. Gordon, an early Romantic Ruralist Zionist from Russia, saw Jewish spirituality and salvation as accessible through physical labor. He not only envisioned the creation of a Jewish homeland, but an inextricable bond between the Jews and their nation through the sacred act of working the land. A staunch advocate of farming and agriculture, Gordon believed in ruralist and communal interaction with nature in which organic bonds—such as family, community, or nation—would take precedence over mechanical bonds, such as state, party, or class. His vi-

sion was that a deep relationship with the land of Israel would instill in his people the fundamentally Jewish tenets of morality, spirituality, and commitment to humanity, thereby putting an end to pettiness and selfishness. Beyond the economic and pragmatic benefits of agriculture—to stimulate the Israeli financial system and provide food and work for the new population—was the idealized and “edifying effect of farming on the Jewish spirit”².

Inspired by Gordon’s vision, the first Jewish settlers arrived in the land of Israel one hundred years ago, where they were met with ecological disaster. Tal describes a “variety of objective travel reports [that] documented massive deforestation, desertification, species loss, and poverty”², painting a bleak picture of a run-down desert calling for a people to engage it. In the ensuing century, the Zionist movement made a concentrated effort to “make the desert bloom,” a common phrase that put emphasis on turning the distressed landscape in front of them into the grand and fertile land of Biblical descriptions. In 1901, the Jewish National Fund (JNF), a corporation owned by the World Zionist Organization, took on the task of reforestation by planting 200 million trees, resulting in an overall net gain of trees since 100 years ago and effectively transforming the landscape, the oxygen levels, and the agricultural capacity of the country².

These efforts were incredibly admirable, if a little misguided; in its zeal, the Zionist movement created environmental problems and then deemed them as secondary to population issues¹. That is not to say that the work of the JNF was intentionally malicious; “these externalities arose more from lack of awareness and hydrological data than from greed or negligence”². As part of their makeover initiative, the JNF almost drained swamplands of the Hula Valley out of existence in order to provide farmers with additional cultivable lands and reduce the prevalence of malaria in the area, negatively impacting biodiversity. Many of the trees planted were fir trees, a nonnative species that is damaging to local ecosystems. The push to turn Israel into an agricultural paradise put strain on the already limited water supply, contributing greatly to the current water crisis.

Agriculture demands a great deal of water. In Israel, 50% of good quality drinking water is now turned out into fields rather than to hous-



ALEXANDRIA VICKERY

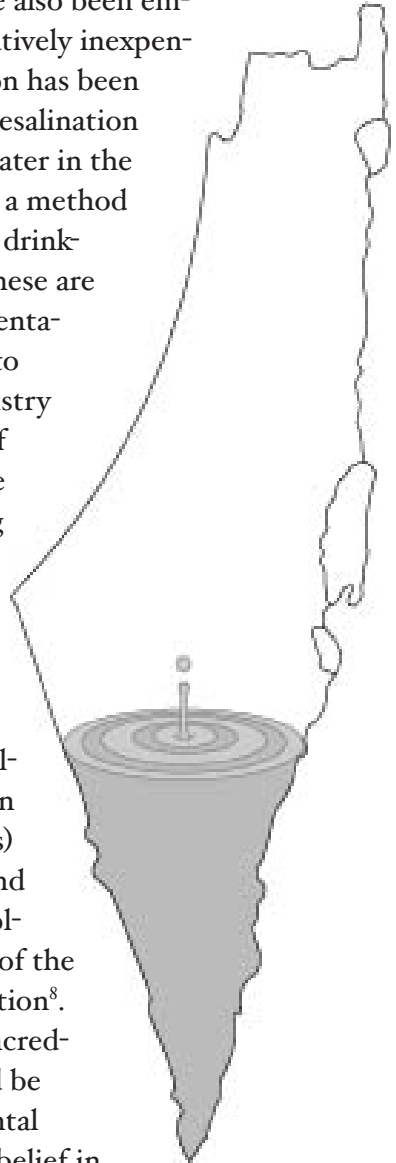
es³. The demand for huge amounts of water has existed since farming in Israel first began (in Israel's first fifty-five years, the population grew sevenfold while the agricultural sector grew sixteenfold²), but it has been especially troublesome since the 1980s when natural water resources had been developed to capacity³. As the state of Israel grew and developed from one million people in 1950 to 7.8 million today¹, demands for domestic water also increased as both population size and the standard of living in a small and fragile piece of land grew, leading to overutilization of water sources². Now, an average of 95% of conventional sources have been exploited for domestic and agricultural use⁴, with an Israeli Water Authority report of a 10% drop in water resources over the past twenty years⁵. This has led to increased salinity of groundwater and other previously fresh sources and has become a huge issue for potable water that cannot be ignored. Global warming and drought have compounded the influx of human-produced water pollution, increasing concentrations of minerals and pollutants to potentially unhealthy levels. The quality of aquifer and major river water sources has been declining over "decades of insouciant contamination from a variety of pollution sources," becoming little more than "putrid sewage conduits"².

A recent period of prolonged drought, accompanied by a huge decline in rainfall, may be a new and drier point of equilibrium. This adds stress to the already strained Israeli-Palestinian relations and may factor into future conflict as each side fights for its right to water. In an already extremely water-scarce region, damage to existing water resources negatively affects human health and ecosystem biodiversity, acting as both the cause and the cost of conflict. Despite a scriptural prohibition against destroying fruit trees in times of war, interpreted as “a war of people is not war of nature”¹, the ongoing conflict in the Middle East has already seen major environmental consequences due to water-related damage, oil contamination or bombed sewage pipes left unfixed. Tal notes “devastation wrought by the widespread dissemination of firearms,” “ground water contamination from government munitions plants,” “residues and disposal associated with nuclear weapons development,” and “ecological implication of the habitat fragmentation that the separation fence (which may demarcate an Israeli/Palestinian border) may cause”²—the militarism of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is doing little in the way of solving the water problem and is actually contributing to it.

In the 2008 report “Cost of Conflict in the Middle East,” India-based think tank Strategic Foresight estimated a 20% decrease in levels of precipitation over the next two decades⁶. This will lead to extreme weather events that will cause the land’s surface to harden so that any rainwater that does fall will not be able to seep into underground aquifers. The mean storage volume could decline as much as 25% by the year 2100 and the dependency ratio could increase exponentially beyond the already high value of 50%. With statistics like these, it is not helpful or productive to take sides or place blame on either side of the current Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While water rights can be disputed, adding fuel to the fire and creating a zero-sum game, water needs can be agreed upon; both Israelis and Palestinians face the same ecologically ominous, dry future, and it is more important that efforts focus on finding solutions than finding fault. This does not exonerate Israel from contributing to the water crisis, it simply necessitates that finding a solution is a responsibility shared with the Palestinian government and their Water Authority.

Significant advances have already been made in terms of water policy, as scientists and ecologists seek non-conventional water sources such as reclaimed wastewater and desalinated water and are implementing vigorous conservation awareness programs⁴. Israel is the world leader in wastewater treatment and reclamation, reusing water at an average rate of 70%⁷. New low-volume agricultural irrigation methods, such as drip, buried, spray, and sprinkler irrigation, have also been employed to minimize water use, and the relatively inexpensive method of reverse osmosis desalination has been implemented with great success. In fact, desalination may be the key to ending the scarcity of water in the region at a remarkably low cost, providing a method of efficiently producing 1000L of safe and drinkable water for just \$0.52¹. Efforts such as these are necessary and their invention and implementation must remain as proactive as possible to overcome the water crisis. The Israel Ministry of Foreign Affairs has proposed a course of integrated policy and action to combat the crisis, including: preserving and protecting both the quality and quantity of existing reserves; increasing the supply of potable water through desalination and purification efforts; advancing the collection and treatment of sewage so that it replace potable water as the main source of agricultural water; intensifying water conservation through economic measures (raising prices) and legal means (improved enforcement and management); and investing in agrotechnology and agroecology, remaining conscious of the environmental impacts of all courses of action⁸.

A.D. Gordon's Zionist message was incredibly meaningful and if applied wisely could be important to the future of the environmental success of Israel. Tal notes that a Zionist "belief in



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science and technology's ultimate triumph was part and parcel of the dream that inspired Jews from around the world to leave everything and move to a neglected, impoverished province"; employing scientific methods in solving current environmental crises is the Zionist's dream, and discriminating, cooperative application of technology can create the compassionate connection to the land of Israel that Gordon advocated. In this way, the Jewish people in the land of Israel can reconcile with their ancestral homeland and satisfy a "longing to restore [their] status as an indigenous people—at once in touch with and rejuvenated by the very soil, plants, and animals that had given birth to their nation millennia ago". A deep connection with the land and the desire to make it flourish and prosper, however, is just as important as smart application of science and technology. Technology provides a platform from which peace talks and new developments could take place, but without strong and serious engagement with the land, neither Israelis nor Palestinians will hold a strong and sincere respect for the land and feel compelled to achieve the full, glorious potential of the region.

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Religion and Anti-Semitism in Contemporary Society

Robbie Pleasant

I was reading the news on Yahoo when I came across a disturbing article. The new Alabama governor, Robert Bentley, announced in his inaugural speech, “Anybody here today who has not accepted Jesus Christ as their savior, I’m telling you, you’re not my brother and you’re not my sister.” As if that weren’t shocking enough, I foolishly decided to view the comments and almost immediately came upon one claiming that “Jews are a hate-filled people.” While the internet is an open forum, making it easy to find posts from racists, idiots, or trolls, the article and comment still raise an important question about the role of religion and discrimination in our society.

Despite claims by political radio and television stations of living in a post-racial society, a look outside the suburban bubble proves that this is far from the truth. People who insist that racism has ended point to President Barack Obama and say, “You see? A black man is president, that means racism is over.” But in doing so they ignore not only the racist remarks that are directed at him, but also acts of discrimination towards other minorities. Ignoring a problem by considering it a thing of the past does not make it go away; it makes it easier to sweep under the rug and turn a blind eye to all the hate that still exists. That is to say, I’ll see your President Obama and raise you Mel Gibson’s drunken tirade about Jews controlling Hollywood.

Naturally, the easiest way to find anti-Semitism today is to look overseas at the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Hamas has made it quite clear, both through their open declarations (such as in March of last year) and their mission statement that they would like nothing more than to wipe out the Jewish people not only from Israel, but from the entire world. In another instance of contemporary discrimination, the Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad continues to deny that the Holocaust ever happened. However, we can also look closer to home; there are examples of anti-Semitism even in the United States.

Due to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, anti-Israeli views often manifest as anti-Semitism. The actions of Israel, a Jewish nation, are sometimes perceived as the actions of the Jewish people as a whole, leading people to believe that disliking Israel means disliking all Jews. Naturally, hate groups such as the Ku Klux Klan and the Westboro Baptist Church still exist and

spout hate speech. But then, they hate everyone who isn't their own race, religion, sexuality really anyone different from them at all.

It's probably topical that I bring up Sarah Palin's Blood Libel comments, in which she referred to insinuations that she or other right-wing figures have incited violence as a blood libel against them. That remark received quite an uproar from the Jewish community, as the blood libels were slander used to demonize Jews, claiming that the blood of Christian children was a matzo ingredient, that Jews had horns, and other such lies. However, insensitive as her remarks were, I do not believe she was being intentionally anti-Semitic, and instead failed to understand the meaning of the term. In other words, she wasn't being malicious, just stupid.

Have I ever been the victim of anti-Semitism? Not intentionally, but there have been times when a joke goes too far. When I was trying to find a classmate's house, he thought it would be funny to leave a trail of pennies leading to the door so that I could tell which one was his, I won't deny that I thought it was funny too. But as I have had to remind that same classmate before, simply calling someone a stupid Jew is not funny (unless you happen to be South Park's Eric Cartman, who is not a character to be emulated anyway). For example, there's Sacha Baron Cohen's "Throw the Jew Down the Well" song, which he managed to get an entire bar singing about drowning Jews. While Cohen is a Jewish comedian, he used that song to prove how easy it is for people to lapse into racist moments without realizing what they're doing. The problem with believing you're beyond racism is that it sometimes makes it easy to be unintentionally racist.

There's no denying that society has come a long way, and is more accepting to different religions, cultures, and races than it was decades ago. It took a few struggles for civil rights to get there, but now people can vote regardless of race or gender. Still, it is important that we, as a society, don't ignore these problems when they appear, because pretending racism and anti-Semitism don't exist will not make them go away. I believe that most people mean well and are accepting of people regardless of their differences. Yet there are still those who are willing to say Jews are a hate-filled people or throw around ethnic slurs like a hot potato. Instead of ignoring racism where it appears and pretending it doesn't exist, we must continue to work towards a future where we do not need to ignore racism, because it's nowhere to be found.

Q⁺ Jews:
A Look at What it Means to be GLBT in the Jewish Community
Aaron White

In this day and age, many college students have to grapple for the first time with what really defines them. One of the most important aspects of college isn't necessarily the education, it's the discovery of one's identity. As many students leave home for the first time, they discover the beauty of independence and the ability to think and do without the concern or constraint of home. Some find their sexuality (others just engage in sex). Other students, myself included, turn inward and seek what is familiar to us: Judaism. A problem occurs, however, when sexuality and religion come into conflict. It comes as no surprise to know that not all branches of Judaism accept homosexuality. If they did, I would be shocked. It would be the first time, in my knowledge, that all Jews were able to agree on anything.

More important than religious approval of homosexuality is how GLBT Jews see themselves within Judaism and how they feel about it. Emma* says of Judaism, "It's what I grew up with and my mom and dad were supportive of me when I came out. I don't know so much of how they [the congregation] feel about my sexuality but then again, I don't think any of them know." Her story is a positive one but for many other Queer Jews this simply isn't the case, depending on which branch of Judaism they grew up with.

There are three main branches or movements of American Jewry: Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox². Many temples are independent or iconoclastic, but I am concentrating only on the largest organizations within each movement and their stances on homosexuality. The Reform Movement, often seen as the most liberal and open of the three major branches, does accept queer Jews. In fact, the two largest reform Jewish organizations, the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) and the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC), not only accept Queer Jews but also openly support gay marriage both religiously and civilly.

The Conservative Movement takes a more traditional stance on interpreting and adhering to the Torah and *halakha*, or Jewish Rabbinic law. The flagship organization for the Conservative Movement,

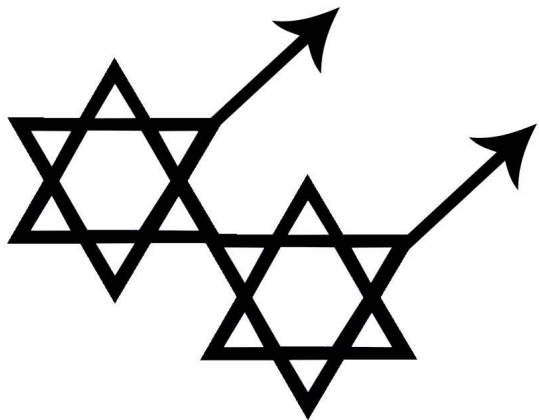


the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), recently issued paradoxical papers declaring: “Conservative institutions may continue not to permit commitment ceremonies and not to hire openly gay or lesbian rabbis and cantors. On the other hand, rabbis, synagogues and institutions can perform or host those ceremonies and are free to hire openly gay rabbis and cantors. The

halakha of the Conservative movement, as voted by the Law Committee, now allows both positions. Both are considered valid.”³

The Orthodox Movement strictly adheres to the *halakha*. It is disappointing to see that the largest orthodox organization, the Orthodox Union (OU) doesn’t accept homosexuality nor any ceremonies of commitment and is not open to GLBT rabbis⁴. Another movement that is important, even as a cursory look, is the Chabad movement. Chabad is active on the UCSC campus and around the world, and accepts queer Jews but does not accept homosexuality because Jewish law unconditionally prohibits the homosexual act. Just as the heterosexual act is prohibited outside of marriage, regardless of personal desires, attractions or inclinations, the homosexual act is also forbidden⁵. This is acceptance akin to “hate the sin, not the sinner.”

Aside from the main branches of Judaism, there is also the Secular Jewish community. Sarah*, another Queer Jew, spoke of her experience with religion and identity saying simply, “I am the daughter of two Holocaust refugees who did not tell me they were Jewish, so I did not grow up in the Jewish community at all. I found out I was Jewish when I was 17. But after I came out, the Jewish feminist community was very



AARON WHITE

supportive.” Despite the brevity of the statement, its impact is clear; though small in number, Jews are extremely diverse and while some are more “Conservative” (in the scary right-wing fundamentalist, “I Like Guns/Killing Small Animals and I vote,” kind of way), many others are open and accepting of the Queer community.

Growing up with and around the queer community in Palm Springs, I’ve always been a strong ally of the queer community but sometimes allies aren’t what someone needs to feel comfortable in their own skin. Sometimes people need faith even if it’s something they can only hold loosely around themselves. As society (arguably) progresses, so too does religion; maybe Judaism can pave the path to acceptance, which is the most anyone can ask for.

*Names changed to protect identity of source

1. Q stands for Queer, which is becoming a more accepted umbrella term for the GLBT community.
2. Please be aware that I am writing about certain organizations and not the entire movement.
3. http://www.uscj.org/Ordination_of_Gays_a7194.html
4. http://www.ou.org/public_affairs/article/ou_resp_same_sex_marriage
5. http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/663504/jewish/Do-Homosexuals-Fit-into-the-Jewish-Community.htm

Things that I am relatively sure of

Noah Miska

Everyone's perspective is valid from their own perspective.

No one chooses their genetics, where they are born, when they are born, or who they are born to, and those four things determine everything that any given person ever thinks, feels and does.

A dollar bill has no inherent value. Value is in food, in shelter, and in other basic necessities. The ability to accurately perceive value is also inherently valuable.

If you want to have rights, then everyone else has to have them too, and with your rights comes the obligation to not infringe upon the rights of others.

Any event can have repercussions of huge magnitude and of a wholly unpredictable nature. Everything you do affects everyone and everything on the planet.

Everyone is always doing what they think is best. Disagreement stems from different understandings of what is best, and from different understandings of which actions are most likely to result in a given outcome.

There must exist an enormous body of shared understanding between people before they have the capacity to misunderstand one another.

If every person refuses to ever kill another animal (humans included), we will see the end of war, and we will be able to free up the resources necessary to end hunger, overpopulation, climate change and most illnesses.

**Presenting Professor Paula Daccarett:
A New Approach to Jewish Studies**

Shani Chabansky

One lovely day amidst the streak of pleasant, summery weather atypical to winter quarter, I had the pleasure and privilege of interviewing Professor Paula Daccarett, a visiting professor of History at UC Santa Cruz. Warm, friendly, and keenly intelligent, Professor Daccarett is a fresh face to match the new Jewish Studies major. She has come to UC Santa Cruz thanks to a grant from the Foundation for Jewish Culture/Jim Joseph Foundation.

Located in the dungeons of the Humanities building, Professor Daccarett's starkly blank office instantly reveals her recent arrival to our university. Nevertheless, we managed to disregard the oppressive whiteness of the walls and I found myself immediately absorbed in our conversation. One of the first things I noticed was her mastery of the English language; she seemed to have an endless supply of technical terms at her beck and call, effortlessly crafting each sentence to articulate perfection. Although she was born and raised in Colombia and educated at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Brandeis University, her English is far more eloquent than many native speakers.

Her relationship with Jewish Studies began in graduate school. Commenting on how she found her vocation, she said, "I've always been curious about narratives, particularly in the context of where people come from. Obviously that applied to myself and part of my interest in Jewish history initially began as an exploration of Jewish identity and personal family stories. But ultimately I never felt comfortable within certain narratives that were offered to me within both the Jewish and non-Jewish worlds." These words will ring true with many of the Jewish students at UC Santa Cruz who, like Professor Daccarett, find immense satisfaction in an academic exploration of Jewish identity.

Revisiting this theme several times throughout our conversation, she revealed that her fascination with the field is informed by Jewish Studies' ability to "act as a litmus test" in societies across time and place. Her metaphor put an abstract feeling into concrete words, a feeling that many students, including myself, have been unable to wholly dis-

cern. “I do think that Jewish Studies offers Jews a way to understand themselves and others to understand Jews in ways that are not those of identity-building,” she said. “It’s a way of critically understanding who you are and where you come from.” This critical understanding makes her courses a unique and valuable contribution to the Jewish Studies program.

Although the course title alone does not suggest astonishingly groundbreaking material, Professor Daccarett presents the first purely historical look at the history of modern Jewry in Latin America in her course “Modern Jewish History in Latin America.” “It’s possibly the first attempt at creating a Jewish history in Latin America course,” she said. “There are other courses that tackle Jewish studies or cultures in Latin America, but they are much more interdisciplinary. I’m really trying to create a history course here.” In this regard, Professor Daccarett is a kind of intellectual pioneer, guiding her students towards a new way of thinking about Jewish history.

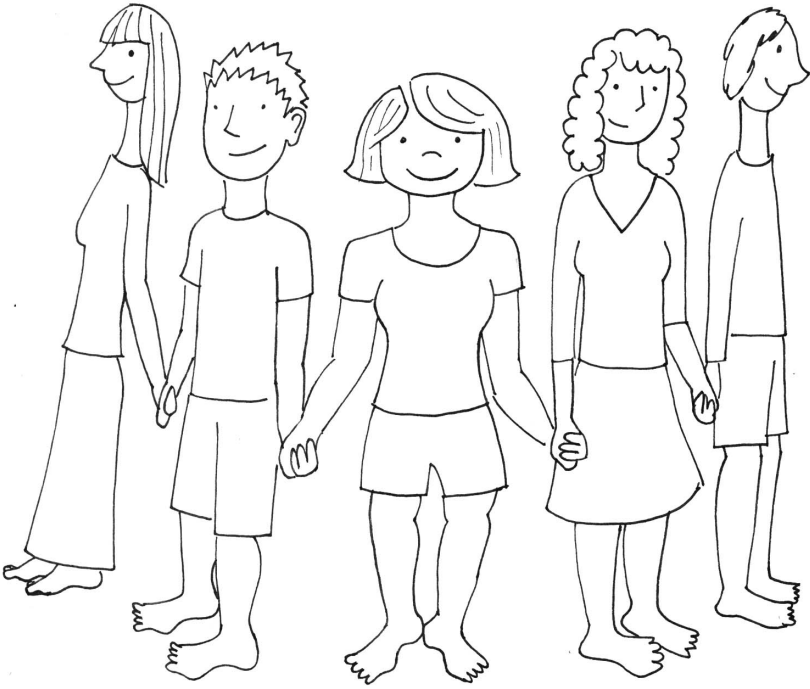
What could be a better place for an intellectual pioneer to launch a pilot course than our educational incubator? A vital aspect of our university is our ability to include multiple voices in each academic program. We can, and should, take pride in this. Professor Daccarett’s courses on Latin America, Jewish Mediterranean port cities, and the history of Jewish women provide an enriched exploration of Jewish Studies. I hope the Jewish Studies program will blossom with her presence. In turn, the Jewish Studies program will help her grow.

And might I just add that having another lady in the Jewish Studies program makes my inner feminist grin from ear to ear. But sorry gentlemen, she’s taken!

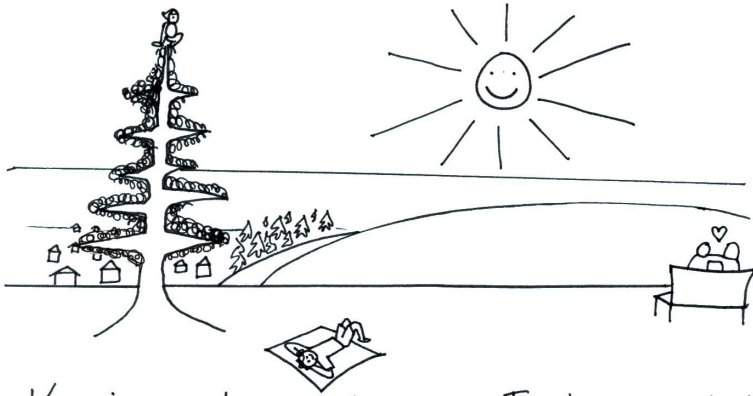


SHANI CHABANSKY

It's up to you!



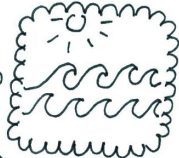
a graphic novella
by Amberly Young



I'm in a tree, observing. Freshmen sunbathe and study on the knoll, frisbees float across the field, the ocean glistens...



How did I get to be so lucky?



UCSC is the most beautiful college campus in the world.



Here you can be anything, no judgment - you can walk around barefoot or in drag and no one minds.



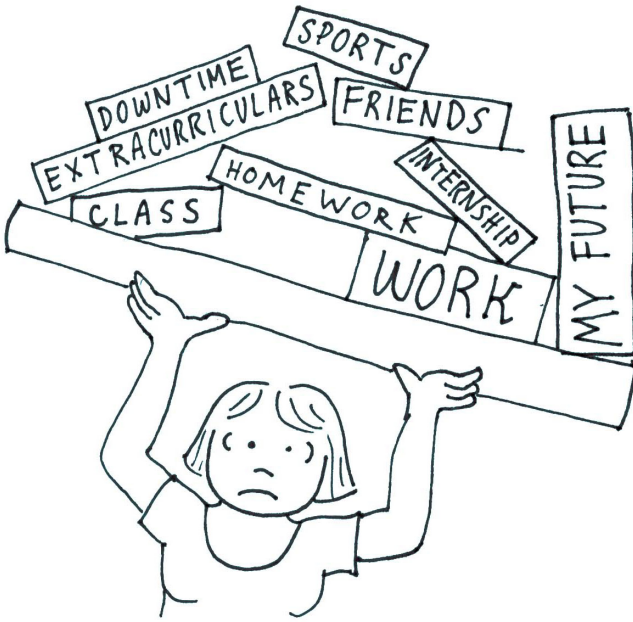
Only one thing stands between you and utter bliss...



Your mind!!!

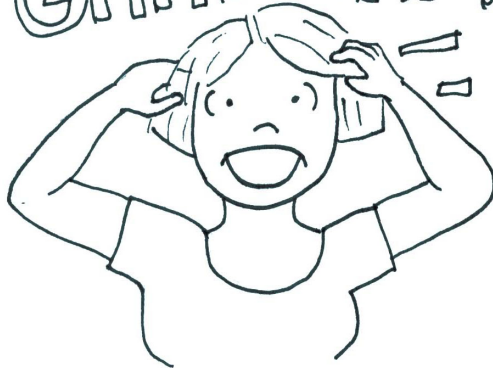


You have the power to
decide how to live your life.



When things start to build up,
you get to choose how to react.

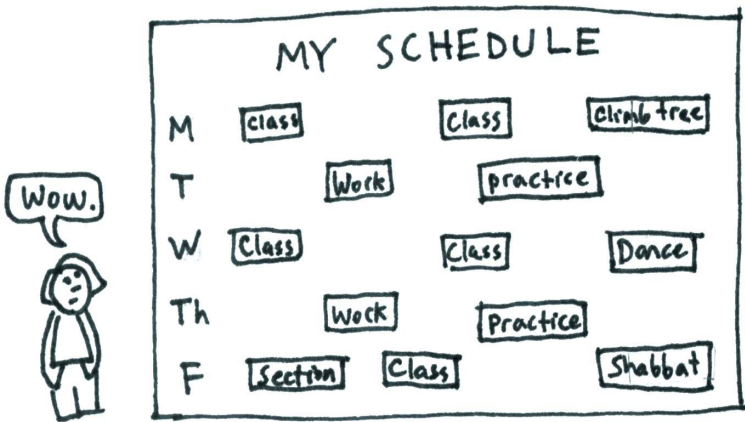
GAAAAAH!!



You can be overwhelmed...



Or you can relax!



It's all about time management.



But the most important thing is to make time for yourself. Do something you love everyday!



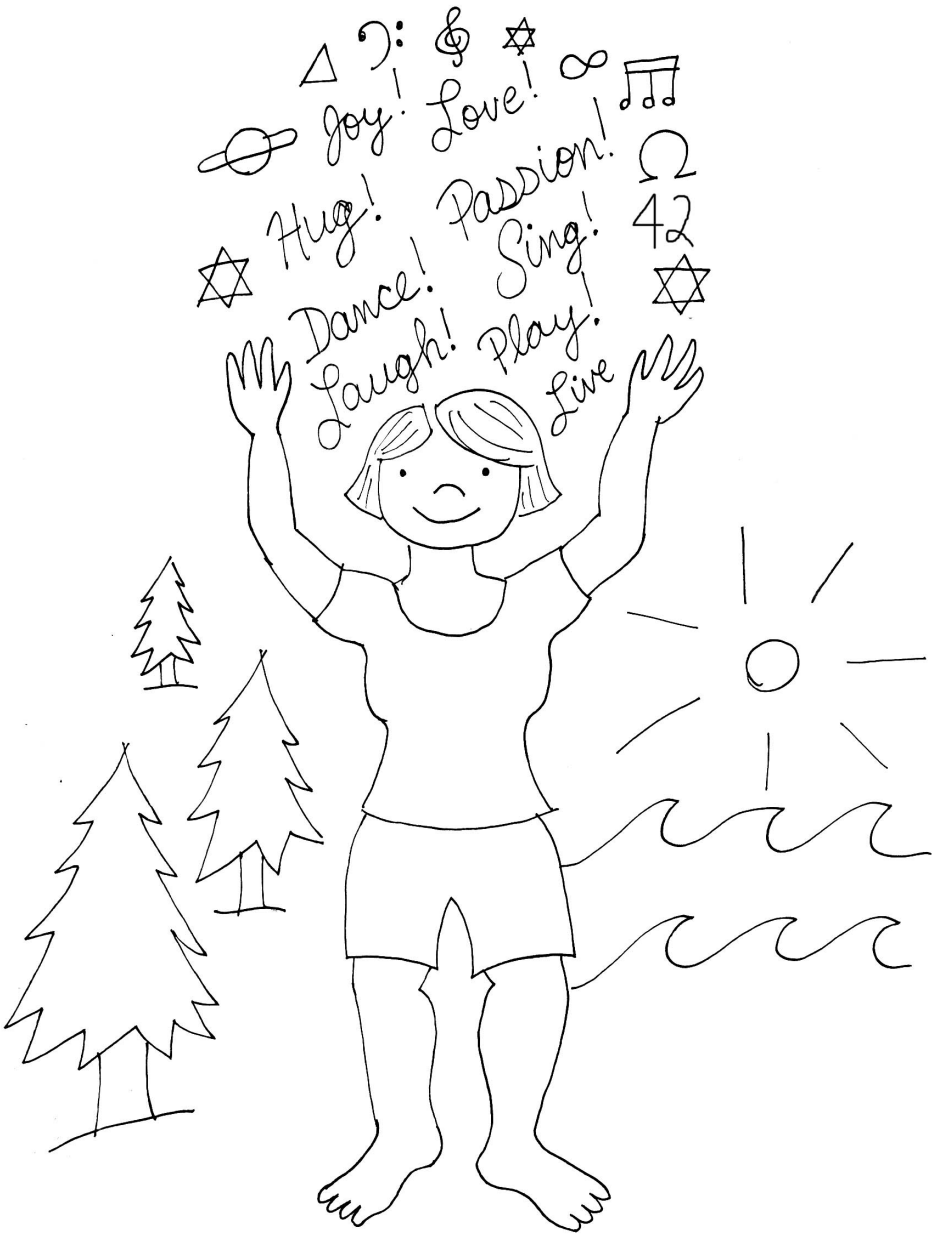
Try something new!



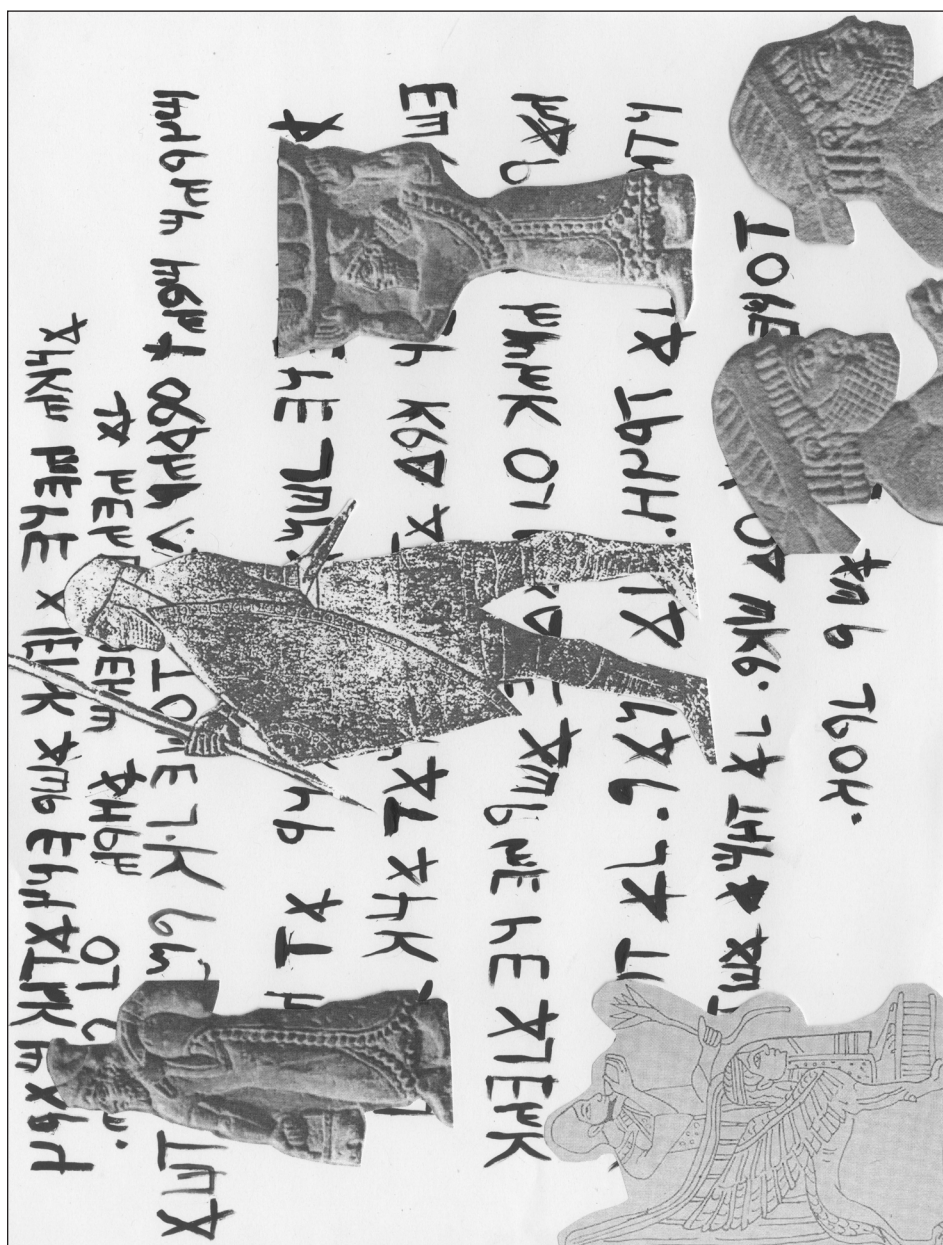
Spend time with friends.



Five, ten, twenty years from now, what will you remember?



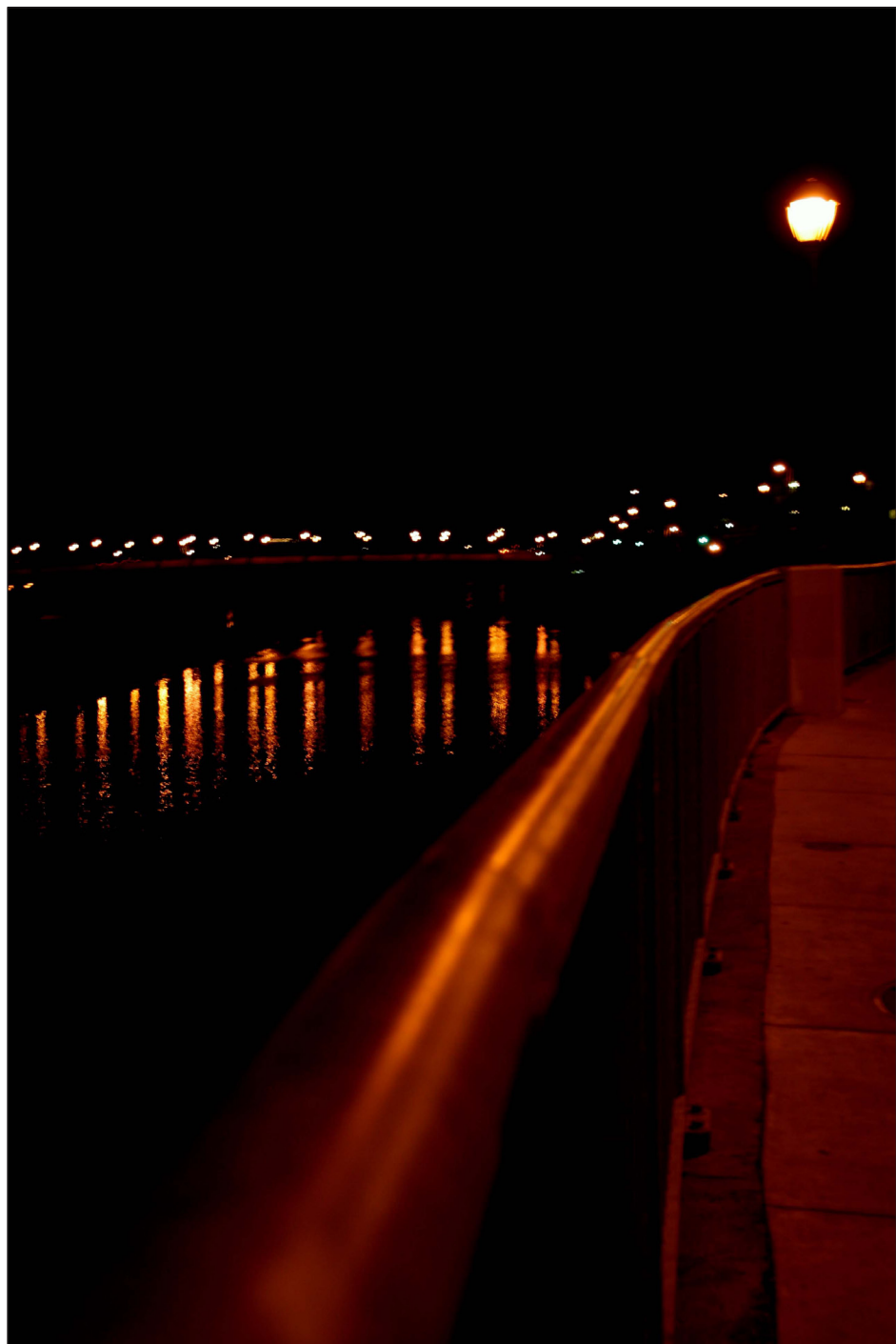
It's up to you!



Ethan Tratner



Shani Chabansky

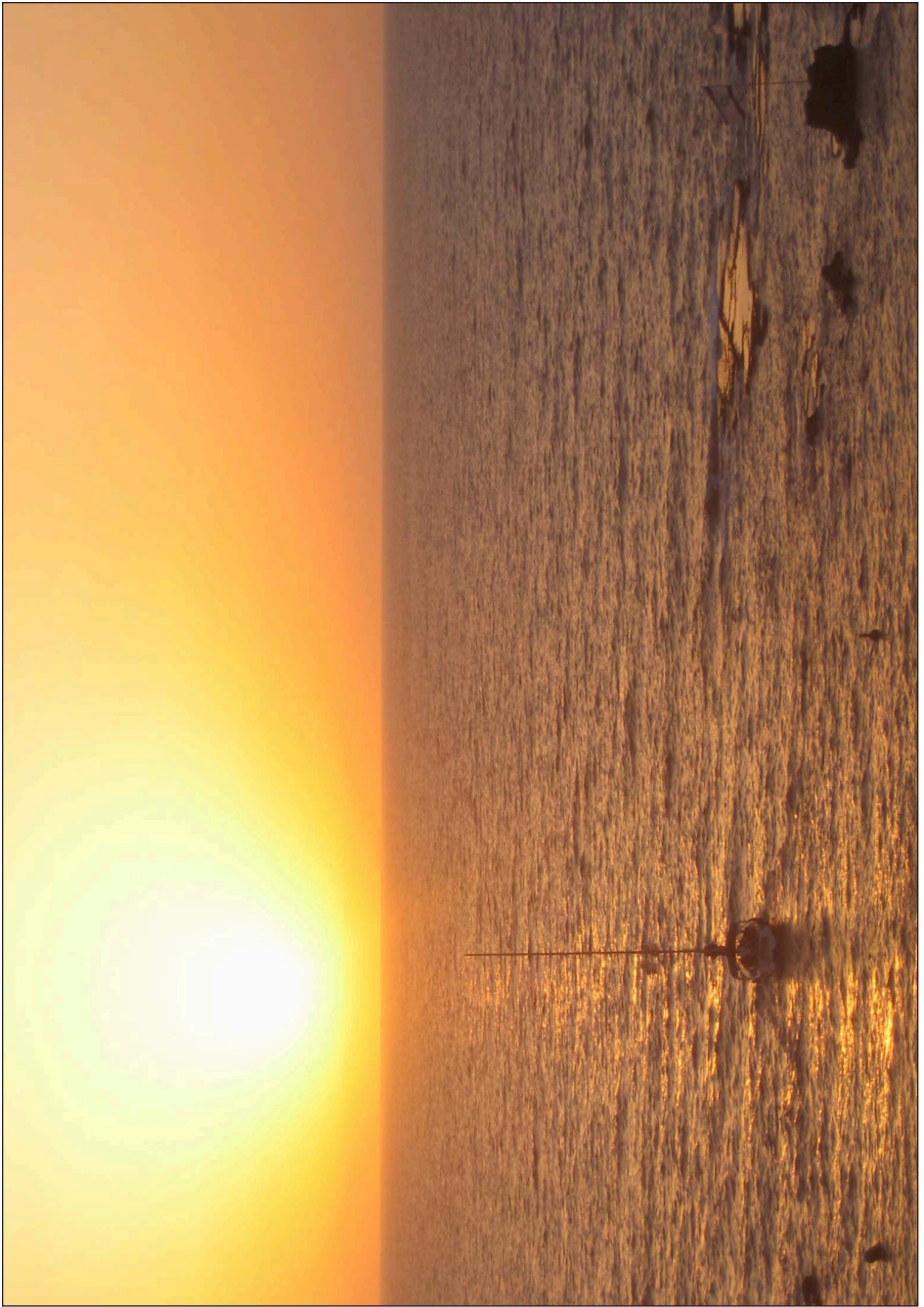




Nate Rogers



Amberly Young



Antaeus



Jews and Language

Ethan Tratner

For thousands of years, Jews have lived as a marginalized people exiled throughout the world. After massive immigrations to countries such as Israel and America and thousands of years living as a minority, the question emerged: what makes Jews unique and where do they belong? In America, many Jews acculturate into society, yet they manage to retain uniquely Jewish traditions. One such aspect of Jewish culture that sets Jews apart from their surrounding cultures is language. Jews have

always used their own language, Hebrew, in religious ceremonies and texts. Within their communities, however, a variety of secular languages were spoken in everyday life. Many of these distinctly Jewish languages are in danger of extinction. It is imperative that Jews attempt to preserve their many languages because it adds vibrancy to our culture.

The ancient Jews spoke Hebrew. This is in the Semitic language group that includes Aramaic, Assyrian and Arabic. These languages originated and were spoken throughout the Middle East. The ancient Jews were subject to attack from various expanding empires fighting over the region. After the loss of the kingdoms of Judea and Israel the Jews were scattered across the Middle East, North Africa and Europe. With the loss of a singular homeland, the Jews integrated into these new empires. Although the Jews are now living in the Diaspora or exile, they have not dissolved into their new nations. Hebrew remained the Jewish language of prayer and new languages formed within the now dispersed Jewish communities.

The Jews, scattered and living in thousands of towns, created a vast trade network between their communities. Jews fell into the niche of craftsmen, artisans and traders within these societies. They began to converse internally in their own unique languages and interacted extensively with the peoples around them, which required firm knowledge of multiple languages. Wherever the Jews settled, their own languages were shaped by the people around them. The Ashkenazi Jews originally settled in the area which would become Germany and Southern France. Their language transformed into Yiddish, a fusion of old German and Hebrew. Jews also traveled into the Iberian Peninsula into the nations of Spain and Portugal. They developed Ladino, a fusion of Spanish and Hebrew. After Islam spread with the empire of the Islamic Caliphate, Arabic spread across the Middle East and North Africa. Jews formed Judeo-Arabic which combines Arabic and Hebrew. While all these languages were fusions, they were all written with the Hebrew alphabet.

These languages, similar to the Jews who spoke them, flourished for hundreds of years. Yet Jews were subject to various campaigns of persecution: Inquisitions, Blood Libel and Pogroms. These campaigns of persecution shifted Jewish populations across the globe, and with them, their unique languages. Jews flooded Russia, Poland, the Netherlands

and eventually America and Israel. These migrations added the languages of these nations to the list of Jewish languages.

When Jews began immigrating to Israel the question of language became a new focus. Jews spoke many languages but had only several in common. A Zionist named Eliezer ben Yehuda decided to create a new language based on ancient Hebrew. His son was the first native speaker of Hebrew in almost two thousand years. He campaigned for the Jews to return to their ancestral homeland and to adopt Hebrew as the new language of the Jewish people. The Hebrew movement gained popularity and became the language of Israel after its founding in 1948. Jewish immigrants from the Middle East, Europe and Africa populated the new nation and made it a homeland for the Jews. These new immigrants adopted the language of Hebrew.

Language is part of Jewish culture and identity, and it separates Jews from the peoples around them. With the creation of the state of Israel and assimilation into nations such as the United States, many of these languages have become scarce. Ladino, Yiddish and Judeo-Arabic are in danger of becoming extinct. Some estimate the number of Yiddish speakers close to 750,000 and growing (before the Holocaust there was an estimated 12 million). Approximately 100,000 people speak Ladino, and Judeo-Arabic nearly gone. These two languages are not growing and are considered endangered.

As a History and Jewish Studies student at UCSC I have studied many aspects of Jewish culture. Language is a major aspect of Jewish lives that has always set them apart from the people around them. As religion remains an integral part of Jewish identity, languages are also important to Jewish heritage. They are part of the Jewish people's unique history and give us insight into the lives and communities of our ancestors. Although modernity and assimilation may seem like a blessing, they come at the expense of certain aspects of culture. Language is just one part of the Jewish identity that is at risk of disappearing. These are the languages of our ancestors and preserving them is one way to stand up for our identity. We must prevent the loss of Jewish culture in the face of modernity.

starting off strong like the losing horse

Aaron White

I walked into mediocrity like a rich man his inheritance.

the awkward way I present myself manifests itself—in My words—
endlessly
scribbled in notebooks, on napkins, and on walls
always fading.

blown away by the words of others

the trappings of boozehounds who love boozehounds who love boozehounds .

last night

I read a book that made Me stop two beers into a six pack

will My words ever bare that kind of meaning?

here again

My awkwardness manifests itself.

The Bicycle Tree

Catie Damon

The couple leaned forward against the cold metal railing and smiled, lips cracked open from the salty air. Below them read, “Issaquah Ferry” in thick, forest green cursive letters. High-pitched notes pierced the wind above the engine’s drone and the girl turned around to find an old man sitting cross-legged, guitar in lap. A small white rabbit was perched atop his head, eyes tightly closed and ears swept back. Its neck was tucked into its body to bolster itself from the wind. In front of the pair, a guitar case lay open with a few crumpled bills scattered across maroon crushed velvet. The man’s smoker’s voice seeped through his yellowed teeth under a horsehair mustache. The girl watched the red, paunchy fingertips press deeply into the strings.

“Did you train him to stay with you?” The girl asked when the singing stopped.

“He likes it up there, it’s the warmest spot, where all the heat escapes. Didn’t have to do a thing, he found it himself.”

“Neat trick.”

“No trick, just us.”

The girl walked over and reached out to touch the rabbit’s soft white fur. She smoothed out the short hair on the haunches and felt its hot, shaking body. It smelled of sawdust and baked earth. The small creature sniffed her knuckles and inched its way until it had a foot on her forearm.

“See, he goes where he likes. Rabbit foot, for luck,” the man jostled the back paw. “Just got’a let a animal do what it want to do, no fuss. It lives for this stuff.”

The girl’s face grew flush and she retracted her arm. The rabbit’s red almond-eyes darted around as it scurried behind the guitar case.

“Eden, we’re almost to Vashon,” the boy’s voice came from behind. She quickly straightened up and returned to the railing.

“It’s not trained,” Eden bit her lower lip and cocked her head to one side. “My grandma used to keep a bunny out in the backyard when I was little. I set up a whole obstacle course for him, gave him treats every time he remembered a jump. Learned it in about a week, a bunny has

a memory span of three weeks, you know. Anyway, we should go inside Caleb, be ready to leave.”

The ferry cabin was filled with warm, stuffy air and sunlight streamed through the windows into plastic booths. As the couple sat down, Caleb took out a long, rectangular box wrapped in butcher paper from his backpack. Eden ran her finger over the creases and unwrapped the package. Inside lay two ebony chopsticks; one end rounded and wrapped in a blue and green crepe cloth, the other end whittled to needle points. Eden focused her eyes on the shock of blue, his scent of peanut butter and aloe, the growl of the ferry engine. Each detail was magnified, polished and stamped.

“They’re for your hair.”

“Yes I know.”

“I’ll get you the real thing in Japan.”

“Don’t want anything from there Caleb.”

“Then I’ll have to surprise you. Here, let me.”

Eden turned her head as Caleb fumbled with her hair. He awkwardly gathered the mass together and started twisting, folding the rope onto itself. He guided the sticks into the strands with one hand on her shoulder, thumb pressed into the nape of her neck.

The couple unloaded their bikes and took the trail that forked from Vashon Highway southwest from the ferry terminal. The moist wooded area was full of spotted fungi and fallen trunks. When they reached a clearing in the forest Caleb suddenly stopped. “That’s the bicycle tree,” he pointed to a rusted red bike frame embedded in the trunk above them. Thick bark had grown over the body, burying it, with the wheels and handlebars flailing out on either side. “Heard someone left it leaning against there a long time ago and now it’s seven feet high off the ground.”

“No one ever moved it?” Eden looked up at the bent spokes, picked up a long thin stick, and prodded the front tire, “Still spins.” Caught mid-motion, the bicycle twisted to get out of the trunk.

“It must be an old bike too, maybe turn of the century? Everyone says something different. I read one story that a soldier left it behind before he was shipped off to World War I.” Caleb scratched his short beard.

“I’m sure his love visited it every day until his return,” Eden smiled wryly, stared out into the surrounding still thicket, and breathed in the clean scent of cedar. “You know I had a dream about the Dalai Lama last night. I was in an auditorium, seated way in the back. I asked where His Holiness was and he appeared sitting in the middle of a long line of chairs on stage. His chair was elevated and he wore a thick wooly hat. He rose and began to walk away and I saw that he was wearing a baby pink wind breaker jacket with an image of a big white tear drop on the back.”

Caleb cracked up laughing and the sound hit the silence of the forest in rapid fire.

Eden turned around and touched the wiry hairs sprouting from Caleb’s chin, heart pounding. “Will you shave it there?”

“I don’t know Eden.”

White mist encapsulated the couple as they walked their own bicycles back to the main road that spiraled down towards the shoreline. They rode until they approached a sign that read, “Quartermaster Harbor” alongside a line of upside-down, neon-colored kayaks. As they parked their bikes a tawny man walked up, dark hair hung loose around his shoulders. A sandwich flopped from his mouth with bits of salami and cheese sticking out. “You looking to rent?”

“Just for a few hours,” Caleb hiked up his plaid sleeves and kicked down his bike stand.



CATIE DAMON

“Where’re you from?” The man wiped his lips with the back of his hand.

“Seattle, we’re staying on island for the day.”

“You like Audrey Hepburn?” Eden pointed.

The man turned around, stuck his left leg back, and flexed his tattooed calf. The actress’ portrait rose and her smile expanded. Twisting his head over his shoulder he grinned, “Love Audrey, she could pass for hapa, half Japanese you know.” He spun back around, “Let me fix you guys up. Life vests are in here, sign the waiver, and I’ll haul them out to you. You a Buddhist?” The man popped the rest of the bread into his mouth and looked down at the beaded bracelet around Caleb’s wrist.

“Oh, no,” Caleb touched the mala. “Not yet at least. I’m actually going to Japan soon to live in a Zen monastery.”

“I’d convert to Shinto myself,” the man mimed drawing back a sword, elbows akimbo. “Good luck man,” he rubbed his palms together and led them to the open garage full of supplies. “Ever done this before? Well, try it on land first, push up down, up down on the foot braces and that moves the stern. If the water makes you rock hard, sometimes motor boats will splice right on through and make big waves, just let the thing sway all it wants, counter-intuitive I know, but just ride that surge and you won’t tip.”

The couple cautiously climbed into their separate plastic barges before being shoved into the harbor. Eden gripped her paddle as the boat teetered onto the jade slab of water. “This is my first time,” she called ahead.

Caleb turned around, “I know.”

Eden’s eyes darted and she tried to find her balance.

“Just follow me.”

“But I can’t.”

The two figures paddled single file along the perimeter of the harbor, past sailboats and mallards. A school of jellyfish engulfed Eden’s kayak and she carefully floated through their translucent bodies. She rhythmically dipped the oar on either side of the kayak. “You know, I don’t have to like it,” she turned, face profile.

“No one says you have to.”

“I want to be the kind of person who’s okay with it.”

“You don’t need to be.”

“I’ll miss you.”

“Be careful, this guy’s going fast.” Caleb lifted his paddle and set it across the cockpit. Eden watched as a wave rose in front of her, and felt her kayak roll. She kicked and clawed as water shot up her nostrils. The plastic kayak scraped against her knees as she tried to slip out. She closed her eyes and felt the rush of immense coldness. They opened in the crystalline water and she saw Caleb’s orange hull above her. She thrashed around. Straining her arms, she pushed down and forced her body up.

Caleb grabbed her wrist as she broke the surface and together they pushed her kayak to a nearby dock. They hauled the big plastic boats over the edge, and lay across the warm wood planks. She closed her eyes and the electric tie-dye pattern under her lids fired away. It hit her now, all the memories that left her body suspended, unclear which direction to take. She felt her many selves scattered around, pinned to the dock. The very husk of her body flew off. Colors swarmed as she watched the landscape of trees peel back into the dark water until there was no Caleb, no dock, no I, no water, no memory.

Untitled

Rachel Starr-Glass

Dry honey-earth cracks beneath my clover hoof,
Shades of sand on sand stretch;
Woven waves of sea.
The heat of day rises with the lazy sun,
Hauled up by copper chains, into the milk-blue sky.
Heat clouds the hills;
Blurs them before my square-pupiled eyes.

Distant fears are carried
On the steady legs of a stubborn ass,
Coaxed forward by a Giant, clad in a muted-blue robe.
Sinking:
Under the weight of worry.
Stable are their shadows, as they climb toward the peak.
A mountain that seldom bares the imprint of man.

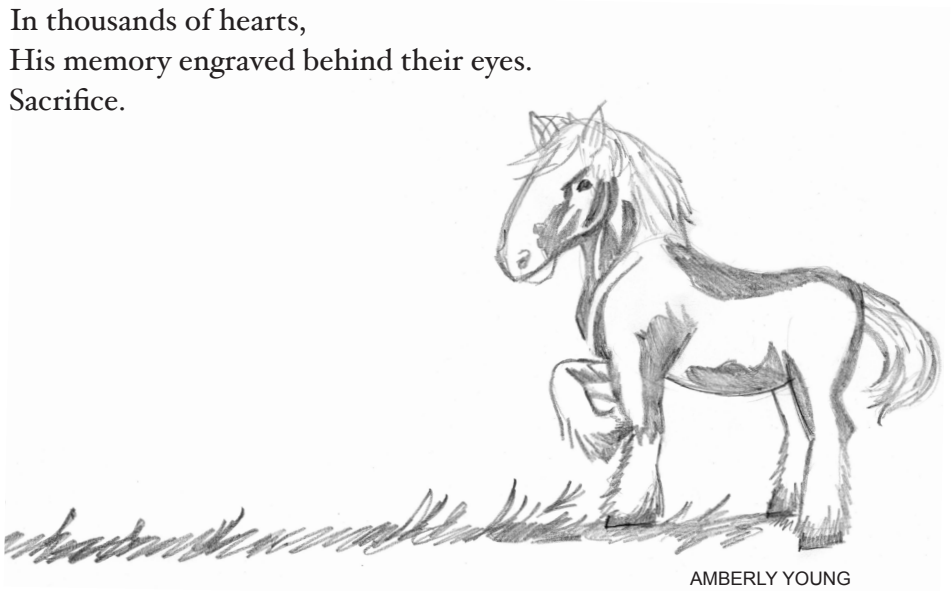
A traveler and his son,
With them a rare desert breeze.
The breeze thickens; exploding into a wind,
Rushing past; stumbling.
Its belly rumbles with fear.
The horizon lets out a sharp cry,
Seven drops of rain fall:
The tears of God.



Terror courses through my veins; I bolt.
Swinging my head toward the East.
The mind runs, the body does not.
Prideful grooved horns collide
With a bush of thorns: My Demise.
Fears turns to white calm.
Sacrifice.

I wait, I watch:
The bearded man and his boy,
Obliviously proceed;
Blinded as they ascend.
Rope and twine tie down the young soul,
Willingly: Bound.

Centuries roll
The boy lived free
His light still kindles,
In thousands of hearts,
His memory engraved behind their eyes.
Sacrifice.



AMBERLY YOUNG

Yom Kippur

By Nate Rogers

“Goddamit, Frank! Wake the fuck up!”

“Huh?”

“I said, wake up and leave or I will make you leave.”

“Jeez, take it easy. I was having the most wonderful dream...”

“You say that every time this happens, Frank. You’re so wasted I wonder if you even have the capacity to dream anymore. Now get out.”

I stand up, trying my best to look as unsteady as possible. Yes, fall on the stool next to you, Frank. Put your coat on slowly. Don’t look Victor in the eye. You’re a good liar until you look somebody in the eye. Out you go, Frankie. Don’t look back.

“Wait, Frank! You have to pay your bill...” Victor’s voice trailed off. Almost as if he felt bad asking from an old friend. I capitalize on the hesitation.

“Oh, that’s ok, Victor. We can have lunch tomorrow!” Making the final movement out the door, I enter a slow trot to the right down Wilshire. I intended to run down 11th Street too, but I was winded. Now I understand why you’ll never see fat, old lions on nature shows. Or fat, old deer, for that matter. They shouldn’t survive. I shouldn’t have survived this long. The only animals in the wild that get fat and old are pigeons and rats—city scum. No wonder they like my house so much.

I was supposed to find a job today but I don’t know where to begin. Anyway it’s got to be five or six in the morning—too foggy for anyone in L.A. to be feeling sympathetic.

After walking around the block back to 10th, I head south toward home. Going past the school I almost step on my own puke from last week. Some things stick around a lot longer than they should.

I still open and close the gate to my front yard even though I could simply walk through all the broken parts of it. It’s not like I have a lawn to take care of, anyway. Force of habit, I guess. I have a lot of habits.

Looking at the front of my house, you wouldn’t think that anybody had lived here for a long time. I blame that damn tree. It’s a hideous, old oak tree that has decided to die all over my house. The gutters are full and leaves get blown in the broken window nearby. And the worst part?

I sympathize with the fucking thing.

The landlord has been on my back about the state of the dump, but I'm pretty sure he can tell that I'm not going to be able to pay rent much longer. I think he feels bad for me, too.

I look through the mail that has piled up and hope for something other than bills. Of course I find something worse: junk mail in her name. A fitting format to be reminded of her, but I just can't stand to see the words "Heather Soders" anymore. Can't the bastards tell that she's never going to order anything from your goddamn hiking catalogue? Not at this address at least.

I grab the newspaper from the heap of mail and throw the rest in the trash. I stopped paying for the Times a long time ago, but I guess they never took me off the mailing list. Too bad I don't read much anymore. I've found a use for them, anyhow. I have a pile of election results, sports scores, and stock trades in my dining room so that if I get evicted, I'll have something to insulate my sleeping bag with. I've been eyeing a spot in the Westminster Dog Park that doesn't look so bad. Could be nice really.

As I throw this paper down, something catches my eye. The date: October 7th, 2011. Could it really be that late in the year already? That makes it twelve years since we divorced. I was a young man at that point. I could have recovered. Now here I am. Forty-seven years old and I'm considering moving to the Dog Park. She always did tell me to come see her if I ever needed anything. It's been too long, though. Too much has changed.

It's a bit surprising to me that in twelve years, I still think I love her. Hell, I never even knew her! Maybe it's the desperation of my situation. Or maybe it's just that the bed was a hell of a lot warmer when she used to be in it. Which reminds me: I should probably try to get some real sleep if I intend to find a job today.

After lying down for just a minute, I suddenly realize how drunk I really am. The fan above me is spinning, but I never turned it on. Jumping into the bathroom, I just barely make it to the toilet before it all comes spewing out of me.

As soon as it's over, I lean back against the bathroom wall and stare out the window. It's the only window in the house where I can see the

sky. Huh. It was cloudy when I walked home, but now it's a spotless, hazy, beach blue. Funny how things can change so quickly without me noticing. I used to watch the clouds move across the sky, finding shapes as they went by. Not anymore.

I guess I got enough sleep at the bar. Time to get going. I put on my last clean collared shirt and walk out the door. The sun is blinding, but at least it's a nice day. It's always a nice day in this town. Even in October.

I fight the initial temptation to go back to Victor's and beg for a drink. Nothing to be gained by that. At the very least, I need to try to accomplish something today.

Three restaurants and two supermarkets later, I've got nothing but a few sympathetic faces. I suppose I'm not the only schmuck looking for a job these days.

As I wander aimlessly down Santa Monica getting further and further from the ocean, a car horn and shrieking tires catch my attention. Not that I really care to notice bad drivers in L.A. anymore, but more out of an instinctual reaction. The dirty smell of burnt rubber stings my nostrils. Twitching with a bit of sensory overload, I turn to see what it was all about. It wasn't really the driver's fault this time. Right in the middle of the two westbound lanes was a mangy looking brown mutt. Deer caught in headlights, really. Too scared to move.

I start to walk east, but my feet soon give out on me. I turn and looked back. A few more cars were slowing down and swerving around him, but he wouldn't last without any help. I mutter a miserable, "God-damit," and run into the street.

My dumb ass didn't even look before I jumped the curb. A beat up old champagne colored Honda almost knocked my ankles right up to the light pole. Things really move fast in this town.

With a bit more caution I make my way across the median and over to the mutt. He was wandering slowly, shaking from head to toe. I reach to grab his collar, but there was nothing there but a few scars.

I must have looked crazy standing in the middle of Santa Monica Boulevard trying to get a dirty stray out of the street. He clearly wasn't budging. Stubborn old dog. With nothing else to do, I go over to him and pick him up in both my arms. I guess it's been a while since I picked

up a dog, because the whole thing was pretty awkward. I have him by his belly with his head near mine and his feet dangling helplessly below my waist. No way I could hold him like this for long, but I had to cut across another lane to get to the sidewalk.

Noticing it too late to do anything but turn my back and cringe, an enormous black SUV barreled straight towards us. I close my eyes and hold tight to the mutt. Ready to go. With horn blaring (as if that would help), the car screeches to a halt about two feet from my back. I stand in shock for a moment before hobbling over to the sidewalk.

Sitting down on the pavement in exhaustion, the mutt soon followed suit and lies down next to me. He must have noticed my good looks, because pretty soon my face was getting slobbered all over.

We walk back up Santa Monica together until cutting down 10th to get home. I was surprised by it, but this dog walked by my side the whole way. That is, until he stops to eat something. I almost break out laughing when I realize that it was my dried up week old puke outside of the school. I give him a light kick and we keep on going. Man, some things never go away, do they? If my puke can sit on the street for days without getting washed off, then maybe things don't change as quickly as I thought. Maybe Heather's feelings are stuck immobile on the pavement just like mine. She does live pretty close to here...

Deciding that the dog clearly needed something legitimate to eat, I head towards the pet store on the corner. Walking in, I feel much more welcome than I had earlier at the restaurants or supermarkets. Or the bar, really. At least here, the rabbit cage smells worse than I do. Strangely quiet for a pet store, though.

I go straight to the counter with the dog wagging his tail beside me, and asked, "What's the most dog food I can get with this?" I take out everything I have in my pockets. About twenty-five dollars. The lady behind the counter leans over, looks at the dog, and smiles. She leads me to the dog food aisle, and points out a recommendation. I grunt a bit as I pick it up (it was a lot heavier than the mutt), and bring it back to the counter.

She is an older woman with gray hair and a moth-eaten gray cardigan to match. She looks me carefully in the eye, and hesitates a bit before finally saying what she needs to ask:

“Listen, this may sound a bit strange, but do you need a job?”



CATIE DAMON

Circumcision: From Covenant to Cure?

Alexandria Vickery

In Genesis 17:11, God commands Abraham: “You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you.” Ritual circumcision symbolizes a commitment to the participation in and perpetuation of the Jewish faith. Jewish law states that Jewish-born males and uncircumcised male Jewish converts must undergo circumcision, or removal of the foreskin, in order to fulfill the contract necessary to be a Jew. Those who are circumcised are thought to have undergone a *mitzvah aseh*, or “positive commandment,” and have therefore created a personal connection to a divine source and the Jewish nation. On the eighth day after the birth of a Jewish male, he undergoes a *Brit milah* ceremony, or “covenant of circumcision,” presided over by a rabbi and performed by a *moהל*, a Jewish person specifically trained for the procedure.

While circumcision has been a Jewish religious commandment for over 3000 years, it has also been practiced for health and sanitation reasons for just as long and has had profound importance outside religious practices¹. Recently, the procedure has shown itself to be beneficial in a completely secular arena. Many researchers have become interested in the out-of-the-box idea of using clinical circumcision to reduce human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) transmittance to heterosexual men. Most research has been focused on using the procedure as a preventative method in Africa, where HIV prevalence and risk are highest.

The effect of circumcision in reducing disease acquisition is biologically likely. The United States Center for Disease Control (CDC) has reported laboratory studies showing the inner mucosa of the foreskin has a higher density of Lagerhans cells, the target cells for HIV infection, than do other genital tissues². It may also be more susceptible to microscopic tears during intercourse that would allow pathogens into the male’s bloodstream³. Additionally, the microenvironment between the foreskin and the glans penis may be one in which the virus is able to survive and thrive⁴. Uncircumcised males are perhaps at greater risk for contracting viral infections such as HIV.

A 2000 systematic review and meta-analysis of the heterosexual

transmission of HIV in circumcised men in sub-Saharan Africa has shown a significant protective effect with risk of infection anywhere from 44% to 71% lower than that of uncircumcised men (the strongest association was seen in high-risk patients at STD clinics)⁵. Another study in 2003 showed a 42% lower infection rate, and several ecologic studies have shown potential links between circumcision and infection at the population level⁶. Randomized controlled clinical trials have also been conducted in three African countries to determine how circumcision of the adult male population affects HIV infection rate; the results showed a 76% reduction of risk in South Africa⁷, 60% in Kenya⁸, and 55% in Uganda compared to those males who were not circumcised⁹. While these studies show that circumcision reduces the risk of male HIV infection, there has not been conclusive data showing that circumcision reduces the rate of transmission of the infection from seropositive males to their female partners.

Additional studies have also shown that male circumcision may not only reduce HIV risk and infection rates, but that it may also show positive effects on sexually transmitted genital ulcer disease, chlamydia, syphilis, urinary tract infections, human papillomavirus (HPV), and HPV-related penile cancer and cervical cancer in female partners⁴.

As with any issues, opponents of circumcision exist for both the religious and health-related aspects of the procedure. New Reform and Reconstructionist Jewish movements view circumcision as a barbaric practice and movements such as Humanistic Judaism argue that it should not be required to maintain Jewish identity. As for its use in reducing HIV risk, it has been argued that the procedure itself is too high-risk, may cause reduced sensation and sexual function, or may lead to social ostracism in cultures where it is seen as abnormal or unnatural. Studies have shown, however, that the most common risks associated with the procedure are minor pain, bleeding, or infection, with no reported cases of death or long-term or serious symptoms¹⁰. Additionally, studies of sexual aspects of circumcision have shown that there is no significant reduction in sensitivity resulting from the procedure, and that some men report improved function¹⁰. No matter what conclusions result from research, however, circumcision and personal decisions surrounding the procedure imply societal consequences.

For those interested in learning more about the use of male circumcision in reducing HIV transmission risk, the CDC has compiled and summarized the studies mentioned in this article, along with several others, at the following web site: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/circumcision.htm>

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Everything is a Circle

Zora Raskin

Nuclear proliferation has become so much a part of the constant buzz of the Washington hive that we have ceased to question

We are building and building and building to destruction

We have accepted the narrative that if we possess 500 times the power of the sun our enemies will crawl back into the holes from where they came from?

That their violence, fears our violence

Break that linear bullshit, everything is a circle.

Violence is, and violence is, and violence is

A circle. A circle. A circle.

They hit us, we hit them back because at that point what do we have to lose?

We have the power to incinerate people. Fuck superheroes, our government has the power of all the X-men combined—The Cyclops of nuclear power will leave only your shadow, while Storm rains toxic ash on you for decades and the rest hide behind Wolverine's dapper grin.

But Magneto had a choice between good and evil and he chose wrong, so karma's a bitch.

Right?

Break that linear bullshit.

Hitler killed himself—not out of guilt, you do not simply repent and

then die—you are thinking in a line again. Violence corrupts the soul.
To create such violence we enact such violence on ourselves.

Tell the legion of one-breasted women in Utah who the enemy is.

The pilot who dropped the bomb on Hiroshima went mad.

No one has asked out generation to pay for grandpa's sins but the Japanese still bleed diseased blood. They still bleed diseased blood.

The violence soaks into our soil, it spreads unchecked through our wind patterns. We breathe violence into our lungs.

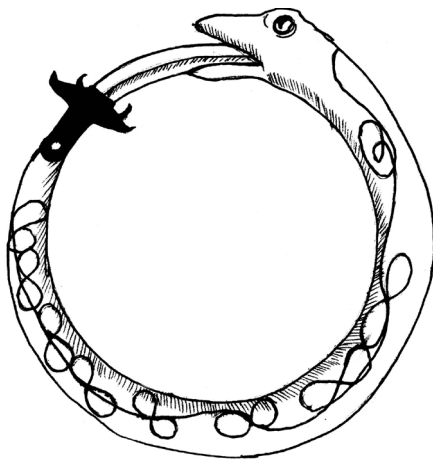
It grows tumors.

Multiplying without question and before we know it the only solution is to use the very same toxic violence to kill itself.

Taking all the good cells with it.

Everything is a circle. Everything is a circle. Everything is a circle.

Break this linear bullshit.



A. NONI MOUSE

Glamour, Fuzz, and Jean Jackets In San Francisco

Nate Rogers

Let's face it: rock and roll would be nowhere without the total abuse of relationship lyrics and the almighty I-IV-V chord progression. Grab a guitar, scribble something about a person you love (or hate), and grow your hair out. That's rock and roll, kids. It's not necessarily good, but it's consistent. Really, it doesn't seem all that difficult, does it? Of course, the missing ingredients for success are talent and ambition, but at a basic level it's not all that complicated.

Take the band Smith Westerns, for example. Their second album, *Dye It Blonde*, features some of the most sophomoric (pun intended) lyrics about girls that I've ever heard. Just ridiculous, how could you possibly be comfortable singing lyrics like, "Love and lust, how come they are such a must?" Corny or not, this is what their music is filled with—and it's fantastic.

So why do I like this band? It's simple, really. They're honest. Who hasn't had some sappy lovelorn poetry swim through their head while dealing with a break-up? I get these kids. And I call them kids deliberately. At the time of this writing, none of the band members can legally drink.

This leads me to a key element in this ongoing soup of rock and roll: youth. Looking back, a large number of fantastic artists have come along at an absurdly young age. Dave Davies of the Kinks was only seventeen when he hammered out the incredibly influential guitar solo for "You Really Got Me" in 1964. Paul McCartney was twenty when the Beatles cut "I Saw Her Standing There" in 1963. Not to be outdone, Bruce Springsteen (already with two albums under his belt) put together *Born To Run* in 1975 at the ripe old age of twenty-five. Not feeling very productive, are you, twenty-somethings?

Bands like Smith Westerns are filling a vital role of youthful energy and innovation. However, the catch with these guys is that their music is strongly derivative of older styles and bands. Tastes of seventies glam and sixties garage rock run rampant throughout their two albums. Think one part *13th Floor Elevators* mixed with two parts *Ziggy Stardust*.

I recently saw the Smith Westerns along with a young band from

the UK, Yuck (this is not my opinion of Britain, but rather, the band's actual name). The show was at "The Bottom of the Hill" in the middle of industrial eastside San Francisco. It was a strange place to find a herd of American Apparel and sarcastic facial hair, to say the least.

Yuck came on first to a large and enthusiastic crowd. With two of the band members sporting black sharpied X's on their hands—the mark of underage shame—they began with their best song (and one that I particularly recommend), "Holing Out." It's a straight-forward shoe-gazey number that feels like it fell straight out of the 90's. Let me put it this way: Kevin Shields is due for a royalty check. The brilliant, hilarious scream that frontman Daniel Blumberg lets go at the end of "The Wall," however, owes no credit but to the singer himself. He's an endearing songwriter, albeit with a very strange sense of fashion. In fact, none of the clothes seemed to fit any member of Yuck properly—and they all had jean jackets! I guess it's safe to say that I'm a bit too distanced from the London fashion scene to ever understand. Although I will say that Blumberg's front-heavy, hand-knit sweater seemed like it might serve as a radiation blanket if the time called for it.

After Yuck made a very strong, very loud impression on the crowd, Smith Westerns came on wearing thrift store outfits fit for a Chicago blizzard (my last fashion comment, I promise). Their performance is quick-paced, goofy, and exuberant. Like Yuck, Smith Westerns show their age at certain times during the set—most notably in between songs. Stage presence during these moments is an art-form in and of itself that comes with years of practice, years they don't have. You could hear crickets chirp and spines tingle after a few stale jokes from Smith Westerns songwriter, Cullen Omori. Yuck's approach of not saying anything at all went over just as poorly.

Luckily for the bands, the music was redeeming. I could feel the room writhing with joy and rhythm during a top-notch performance of "Imagine Pt. 3." Better yet, their lead single, "Weekend," turned the floor into spastastic dance party. This is also a good moment to add that the very best part about seeing a show in San Francisco is that, no matter how weird a dancer you are, there is always someone else in the room who is weirder than you. My swiveling off-beat grooviness was on full display that night.

What these bands have accomplished so far fits well within the simplistic rock and roll success guidelines many in the past used. The tough part, however, is what comes next. At some point, the content and creativity need to expand. McCartney may have started out with “I Saw Her Standing There,” but over time he began to tackle tougher, more profound subjects. If the Beatles had continued to incessantly write songs about holding girls’ hands, they would have stuck themselves in time and lost listeners’ interest. For the Smith Westerns to improve (and I apologize in advance for comparing Smith Westerns to the Beatles), they need to develop in much the same way that McCartney did as a songwriter.

The difficulty in writing about Yuck and Smith Westerns is that I always find myself reverting to a discussion of their age. Simply put, it’s very impressive that these bands are finding success and acclaim so quickly into their musical careers. However, this doesn’t absolve them of being judged fairly in the grand scheme of popular music. When I consider this, the reality is that both groups have a lot of room for improvement. With Smith Westerns, they need work to become a more compelling live act by tightening up the screws a bit. Yuck, on the other hand, needs to capture their emphatic stage energy better in the studio. In a way, though, this made them a great pairing for a concert: a strange, yet highly enjoyable two-course dinner of Pitchfork darlings.

It’s hard to say what the future will hold for any group these days, let alone very inexperienced ones. Our technologically-driven culture has a unique hold on the direction of pop music and with it comes a low tolerance for failure. I’m sure Smith Westerns and Yuck know better than I do the challenges that they face in propelling their careers forward. However, that is simply a waiting game. The only thing to do now is to enjoy the hand-holding goodness.

You can hear Smith Westerns and Yuck at:
myspace.com/smithwesterns
myspace.com/yuckband

Random Ramblings From Your Friendly Neighborhood Jew:

Episode 9

Robbie Pleasant

I have writer's block.

I know you can see that there are still plenty of things written in this article, and so you're reading on in the knowledge that something has been said, but that's in the future of my writing these words right now. At the moment, I'm looking at this blank page and wondering what I'm going to say to fill it.

Fortunately, that's where my fellow writers here at Leviathan come in, for I may be the friendly neighborhood Jew, but I'm not the only one with random things on my mind. So at the suggestion of a fellow writer, let's take a look at Jewish stereotypes popping up in characters who are probably not Jewish, and in fact aren't even human.

I want you to take this time and run down to the nearest video store, and find a copy of the first two Star Wars prequels (if you can stand Hayden Christenson's acting). Fast forward to the scenes where Watto appears and take a close look at him. A long nose, greedy, bit of an accent, and in Episode 2, a beard and what could almost be considered a metal yarmulke. Although I never connected the dots at the time, I later learned that many people complained about him being a Jewish stereotype. (Interestingly, as far as I'm aware, no one has complained about Jawas, the short little desert-dwelling junk merchants from "A New Hope.")

The goblins in the "Harry Potter" series, the short, gold-loving, bankers of the magical world, have received similar complaints. As with Watto, I never thought of the characters as Jewish stereotypes, but apparently enough people did to complain about it.

This makes me wonder, is this a result of hypersensitivity or insensitivity? Are the characters really mocking stereotypes, or are some people so focused on finding something to complain about that they can take anything possibly resembling a stereotype and raise a fuss about it? So both Watto and the goblins love money. Big deal, does that make them Jewish? Maybe their physical features could be taken to resemble a Jewish caricature, but exaggerated features like ears or noses are com-

mon traits for fantasy creatures. Maybe I'm just brushing it off too quickly, or maybe those who raise ire have legitimate complaints, one can't say with absolute certainty either way.

Now that I've said that, I find the writer's block is returning and preventing me from writing a full conclusion. So I'll leave it at that for now, and let you get back to watching the movies I had you rent. Perhaps this time you'll notice something about the characters you never thought of before.

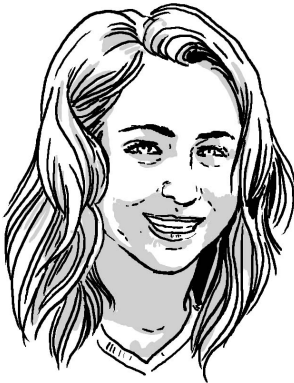


AMBERLY YOUNG



Antaeus has decided, contrary to the advice of his doctors and psychiatrists, to re-apply for a wrestling license with the hope of making the most epic comeback ever. He currently spends all of his time training at the gym and writing for *Leviathan*.

Shani Chabansky is a third year majoring in Anthropology and Stewish Judies. She enjoys making spoonerisms, sultry songs and slimey-yet-satisfying sounds such as a squawking mallard in heat, stepping on a thousand screeching cats' tails or a thick stew when it's boiling.



Catie Damon has grown old with *Leviathan*. Her hands are not as steady as they used to be and her eyesight is waning. It is time to say goodbye to the magazine, so she's packing up suitcases, preparing to walk the stage, and setting off to dwell in new lands.



Robbie Pleasant has been writing for *Leviathan* since his Freshman year. Now in his final year at UCSC, he continues to write and contribute articles such as his quarterly editorial, “Random Ramblings From Your Friendly Neighborhood Jew.”

Nate Rogers is a 3rd year Literature student at UCSC. He enjoys calculus, paying rent, bad weather, and lying. You may find him standing in CVS, looking at the latest “Now That’s What I Call Music!,” and saying, “Really, guys? Now 37? Really?”



Rachel Starr-Glass is a 3rd year Jewish Studies major at UCSC. This is her first quarter writing for *Leviathan*.

Ethan Tratner is a senior History major and Jewish studies minor. He enjoys reading science fiction and watching bad horror movies. He is hoping to go to grad school and work in a museum but maybe take some time off first.



Alexandria Vickery's outrageously awesome outfits often cause car accidents. If she had to choose between you and a sloth, she'd pick the sloth. In a few weeks she is going to volunteer at a Sloth Orphanage in Costa Rica. There she will be fulfilling her childhood fantasy of hanging upside-down and moving in slow motion



Rachel Wallace spends half her time upside down on her head or in the air. (She recently won the official nation-wide Defying Gravity Competition.) She spends the other half of her time at Jewish events, Israel events or partying at the UCSC Science and Engineering Library.

Aaron White smuggled into the U.S. amongst a herd of ornery Alpacas fleeing the Alpacalypse. Three months shy of intellectual freedom and all he can do is stencil sweet nothings on street corners with childish glee. One day he will grow up and become a real person. Maybe.



Amberly Young is in disguise. She is really Meta-Amber, the world's first superhero that fights crime while fighting crime. Her superpowers include writing songs about song-writing, tie-dyeing while wearing tie-dye, and reducing bad guys to meta-confusion about why they're so confused in the first place.

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

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

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