

Purim Issue

Shelanu

The University at Stony Brook Jewish Newspaper



photo-Adam Rattiner

The Only Problem: Bananas Can Evade Detection

Food Detector in Kosher Cafe

The University at Stony Brook Hillel has installed a food detector at the entrance of the Kosher Cafeteria in Roth Quad. It has been installed by the Food-Detecto Company of New York after a series of incidents in which people were caught bringing in food or stealing food. This is one of the first of a few steps taken by Hillel to make the Jewish life on campus safe from crime.

According to Bob Lazazl of the Food-Detecto company the detector senses any liquid in the food using reverse-polar air defusion. Lazazl explained, "The mechanism sucks particles flowing around in the air as the individual passes by and air-conditioning cells inside combine the air with the oxygen from the H₂O: This actually creates more ozone, so not only have we created a food-detector but we have solved the earth's o-zone depletion problem. It is

an environmentally positive food detector."

In November of 1993 a man was caught stealing broccoli from the Kosher cafeteria and was told he would be banned from it if he was caught violating the food rules again. A week later he was caught bringing Sushi into the cafeteria. He was banned from the cafeteria.

Four months ago a "food bandit" ran into the cafeteria dressed as Yoda from Star Wars and stole a plate of fried chicken. Student, Zev Hunter said, "At the time we weren't sure if he was just dressed up because it was close to Halloween or because he was trying to be unrecognizeable."

It is because of these incidents that Hillel has decided to take drastic measures by installing the food-dector. It will cost three thousand dollars all together. It is approximately fifteen hundred dollars for the detector itself, one thousand to install

it, and five-hundred for the beeper that informs the Rabbi that food has been stolen.

The only mistake that has been detected with the food-detector using a flaw finding detector for food-detectors was the "banana flipping" problem. Just as some terrorists were able in the eighties to get guns through airport metal detectors by flipping them over the side and catching them on the other side, when no one was looking, a "food bandit" can flip a banana over one side of the detector and catch it on the other side when no one is looking. Lazazl explained, "This is a problem we are quite aware of and we do have a food detector on the market that doesn't have this problem but it is much more expensive. We are exploring more possibilities with the banana."

-Adam Rattiner

HILLEL PROGRAMS

- 3/11 **STUDENT BOARD MEETING**
(Also meets on 3/25)
8:00 pm - Humanities 240
- 3/9 **KIDS SHABBAT PROGRAM**
(see box for details)
- 3/12 **ETHICS CLASS with Rabbi Topek**
(Also meets 3/19 & 3/26)
4:00-5:00 pm - Humanities 157
- 3/12 **UJA PHONE-A-THON**
9:00 pm - Humanities 165
- 3/13 **BIRTHDAY PARTY**
10:00 pm - Student Union 231
- 3/15 **SHABBATON...SHABBATON...SHABBATON**
Call 632-6565 for details.
- 3/18 **A DISCUSSION: WHY BE A REFORM JEW TODAY?**
with Wally Shachet Briskin
8:00 pm - Humanities 240
- 3/19 **Hillel Open House - Free Lunch**
All Welcome
12:30 to 2 p.m. - Humanities 157
- 3/20 **"WHY IS THIS NIGHT DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER NIGHTS?"**
Passover Program with Rabbi Joseph Topek
9:00 pm - Kelly Quad, Eisenhower Lounge
- 3/21 **UJA CHARITY BENEFIT SEMI-FORMAL GOURMET DINNER**
(see box for details)
- 3/25 **DINNER SHMOOZE FOR GRAD STUDENTS**
with Special Guest Speaker
(see box below for details)
- 3/28 **RUSSIAN CLUB EVENT**
Call Maks at 632-3748 for details!
- 3/28 **PRES. SHIRLEY STRUM KENNY SPEAKS**
(see box for details)

you're invited . . .

charity benefit semi-formal dinner

**Thursday, March 21
7:00 pm
The University Club**

**Join us for a gourmet dining
experience featuring kosher
game meats. Proceeds will
benefit the UJA.**

Pres. Shirley Strum Kenny

"Growing up Jewish in a Small Texas Town"

**Thursday, March 28
6:30 pm
Javits Room, Main Library**

Refreshments will be served.

**Dinner Shmooze for Grad Students
Featuring Guest Speaker**

"Sexual Harassment in the Work Place"

5:00 pm - Humanities 157

FREE DINNER

Help us plan Matzah Ball 2!

Kids Shabbat Program

For ages 2 1/2 - 7

**Saturday, March 9 at 10:00 am
Roth Cafeteria, 1st Floor**

**Bring your kids to join the fun!
Games, Stories, Snacks & More**

Shelanu Staff

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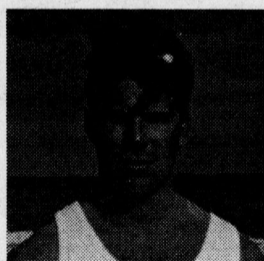
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Bosnia: A Personal Narrative

A Letter From The Editor:

It is certainly a pleasure to edit this newspaper which has been published since the late seventies. This particular issue falls near the holiday of Purim and it is a tradition to write a lead article which is a joke. My goal with this paper is to explore Jewish life on campus, and to have some Jewish oriented stories by students on campus.



Adam Rattiner

- Adam Rattiner

Kira's Letter

A Friend Writes About Sarah Duker, Killed in a Bus Bomb in Israel

Sarah Duker and her fiancé, Mattityahu Eisenfeld, two Americans, were killed in a terrorist bus bombing Sunday, February 5. This letter was sent from a friend of Sarah, Kira, to a friend of Ethan Brandler, president of Hillel at Stony Brook. This is Kira's letter.

I just found out that my friend Sara Duker was killed in the terrorist attack in Jerusalem this morning. I doubt many of you knew her, and as a tribute, I want to write you a little about her (if I can see through these darned tears)

Sara and I first met when we took first-year Russian together, in my first-year at Barnard. She was a Sophomore and was the first person to introduce me to CJC (Conservative Jews At Columbia). She was one of the few people I felt I could relate to, in terms of Judaism and Israel: she was both a Zionist and a liberal. She was dedicated to Conservative Judaism, but more importantly, she loved Israel. She also was involved with the Jewish Theater Ensemble on campus and had a role in the Agatha Christie mystery that was performed my first year (I can't remember the name of the show). We shared a lot of fun times, both in Russian and in Jewish activities. She was known for standing up in CJC and announcing, "If there are any first-year students who don't have a place for shabbat meals, please contact me," and she often found ME a place to eat shabbat dinners. She was always thinking about others and how she could help.

She dressed "funkily:" multi-colored skirts, shirts, or hats. Her tone of voice matched her aura of lightness and tranquility, and yet she always had something interesting and enlightening to say. I remember talking to her about boys, and we both wondered when/if we would find "the right guy." By her senior year, she had found a terrific boyfriend, Matt. He was a kind and intelligent Rabbinical student, and I regret that I didn't get to know

him very well.

Together, they went to Israel this year. Together, they were killed on the bus in Jerusalem.

During my sophomore year in Israel, I found out that Sara decided to spend spring semester at Hebrew University. I surprised her with a visit on one Shabbat, and we both were so excited, we could hardly suppress our smiles. We chatted away for hours, and after I left, we talked on the phone.

When I came back from Israel, I was very depressed, not least of all because I found out that Nechama (my adopted Mother from Kfar Blum) had passed away. The first time I met Matt was in the Jewish Theological Seminary's succah, as Sara had invited me to join them for Shabbat dinner. I was very down-in-the-dumps and rather anti-social;

still upset that I missed Nechama's funeral. Sara was very understanding and gave me a warm hug, forgiving my frowns during dinner. During the year, we seldom saw each other, since both of us were busy: she was getting her final senior projects out of the way, preparing for graduation, etc., and I had joined the double-degree program and was busy with Pizmon as well. But we saw each other at intervals, always hoping to spend more time together.

The last time I saw her was last April (or early May? I can't remember). She invited me to join her Russian class, as they were going to a Russian restaurant in Brighton Beach. I was glad to join in the fun, bringing confused Jesse along. Sara and I sat across from each other, giving each other tips on what food was vegetarian and what food was not. It was one of the most wonderful experiences We danced to Russian music, enjoyed speaking in this poetic language, and getting as close to "authentic Russian" as possible.

It's almost ironic that the last time I saw her mirrored the first time: in a Russian context.

This past summer she was on a special joint-environmental science program, between the USA and Russia. She joined a team of Americans and Russians, to research two lakes: one in America and one in Russia. I know she grew very close with these Russians and kept in touch with them via email (she often referred to them in her mass-e-mail messages).

This year, she was studying and working at Hebrew University, while Matt studied at Pardes. She sent wonderful messages about life in Israel. Her last message was terrifyingly ironic. She related a humorous story about her trip to work that morning, commenting on the near-bus accident which was aggravated by quick-tempered Israeli drivers. Along with the tension from the "close-call," an old woman was insisting on closing the windows, and the other passengers were complaining.

The last bus she rode had no open windows. The Jerusalem morning is quite chilly in the winter. The bus was completely contained, so, unlike the bombing of summer of 95 in Tel Aviv, this bomb retained all of its potency, having no windows as outlets.

Sara was a special woman. She was a combination of charm, femininity, and feminism and intellect. To look at her, you'd think she was quiet and perhaps boring. But when speaking with her, you find in her not only activism and determination, but logic, humor, and kindness.

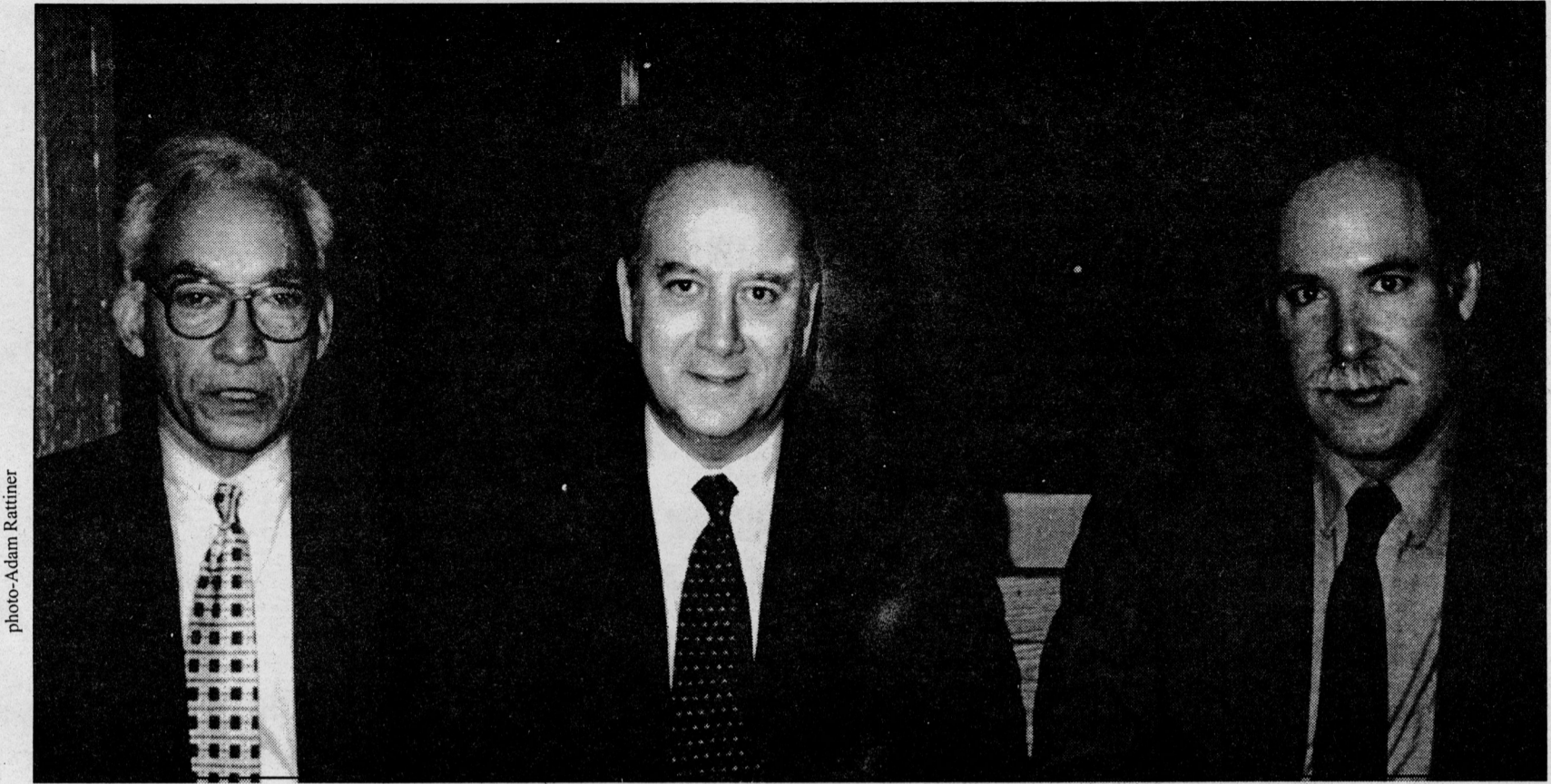
I am still confused and lost ... Sara was on her way to true success: she held a research position at Hebrew University (in her last letter, she was proud that she was noted in a published work), she was actively Jewish and considering staying in Israel and making aliya, she was perhaps on her way to marriage and a starting a family of her own, she was continuing her Russian by speaking with a co-worker, and she kept up with her friends "back home," via email ... in short, she faced challenges, but she was happy.

Sara just did so MUCH - and was on her WAY to doing so much MORE - I think that's what frustrates me and confuses me so. She was such a role model. She was such a friend.

I know many of you didn't know her. I guess I wanted to write and "introduce" her to you, since now you won't be able to get a first-hand introduction. In the upcoming weeks, please say a special prayer for Sara and all of those who perished with her in the terrorist bombing. Believe me, she deserves all of our prayers that she may rest in peace and may her memory be blessed (zichrona le'vracha).



Sarah Duker



Justice Lewis Douglass, Justice Jerome Hornblass and Jeffrey Ross of the ADL

New York Judges Speak at Stony Brook On Black and Jewish Relations

A forum was held last Tuesday in the Student Union in which two judges of the Supreme Court of the State of New York, Justice Lewis Douglass, and Justice Jerome Hornblass, spoke on issues involving American politics and spoke on the controversy between the Jewish and Black communities.

Besides having been a judge since 1978 Douglass has been president of Black Enterprise Magazine, the Deputy Commissioner of a Prison System, and he is currently the Chairman for the Judicial Commission of Minorities.

Hornblass has taught at New York University, City College, the New School. He has been commissioner of the New York City Addiction Drug Agency, and the President of the American section of International Jewish Lawyers and Journalists. He is also one of the co-founders of "Blacks and Jews in Conversation."

Jeffrey Ross of the Anti-Defamation League introduced the two judges. He explained that one of the leading neo-nazis in the United States wrote that, "The best thing that can happen is the conflict between Blacks and Jews." The meeting was a step in the right direction to ease the conflict between the two groups.

Douglass spoke first about the history of relations between the two groups since the sixties and how that bond has created opportunity for new black leaders. He could remem-

ber a time when he had to switch to a segregated train when he entered the South on the rail road and a time when there was only one black congressman in the country. But in the 1950s the Civil Rights movement came and the Jews were helpful in this movement. He said that the chief fund-raiser for the NAACP was Jewish, and that Martin Luther King's chief strategist was Jewish. Many Black businesses are funded by Jews.

Douglass explained that this success of the Civil Rights Movement opened up opportunities for other Black leaders, including Farrakhan. His speech shifted to the topic of

Farrakhan which is a hot spot between the two groups. Farrakhan has two themes in most of what he says: 1- Black responsibility and 2- Hate speech towards other groups. Farrakhan emphasizes cleaning up the black communities. Hate speech towards other groups in Farrakhan's speeches is not just addressed at Jews. Farrakhan picks on the Black Baptists as well and certain Black churches didn't go to the Million Man march because of it. He said, "Keep Farrakhan in perspective. He doesn't have much clout." Farrakhan was originally an entertainer who just became a

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Chinese Scholar to Speak about Judaic Studies

A Chinese professor from Nanjing University teaching a course on Jewish American Authors? Sounds strange, doesn't it? Professor Xu Xin has dedicated a large portion of his time to closing the enormous gap that exists between Chinese and Jewish cultures. Professor Carole Kessner has arranged for Xu to enlighten the students and faculty of Stony Brook with his unique perspective on how the Chinese view the Jewish religion. He will also discuss the strides he has made to further educate his own culture while constantly pursu-

ing more and more knowledge of a culture that was once mysterious to him. This convergence of culture will take place on April 12 at 2:15 in the Poetry Center located on the second floor of the Humanities Building.

His interest in Judaism began after Saul Bellow, who is Jewish, won the Nobel Prize for literature. Xu had never actually met a Jew before, until he became friendly with a Jewish man named James Friend who came to teach at Nanjing University. Xu eventually

(Continued on page 14)



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Who's At Stony Brook:

Joseph Topek: Rabbi and Hillel Director

How many Rabbis do you know that not only study Jewish Law, but in the summer put together (tinker with?) a 1938 Studebaker? Rabbi Joseph Topek was born in 1955 in Houston, Texas. He went to a Jewish day school and continued studying Judaism through high school. He went to college at the University of Texas at Austin, graduate school at Brandeis University for a Masters in Judaic Studies, and rabbinical school at the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York. He is currently the Rabbi and Director of Hillel at Stony Brook and also President of the Suffolk Board of Rabbis.

Rabbi Topek, known as Joe to most, grew up with a father who was a dentist and a mother who is still a professional artist. His paternal grandparents were from Poland, but his mother, who was born in Brooklyn, was the child of two Americans-born parents. His maternal grandfather, Melvin Silverman, was a builder and "when World War Two began, the Army Corps of Engineers needed building contractors to build barracks because they were starting to recruit and draft people into the Army in 1941." He said that, "Between 1941 and 1944 my mother, her parents, and her sister moved up and down the Eastern Seaboard. They lived in places all along the coastline: Norfolk Virginia, Mobile, Alabama, Texas City, Texas. The United States had big naval bases in each of these locations." At the end of the war Houston was a "boom town." "Houston couldn't build housing or office space fast enough and my grandfather saw it as an opportunity, so they came to Houston permanently in 1945. He was also a philanthropist and was the chairman of the UJA campaign of the community as well as president of Temple Emanuel, which is one of the largest Reform temples in the country now."

In college, he created a Judaic Studies major through an independent Humanities program. He studied Jewish history, Rabbinics, and Jewish literature. "We had a fantastic Hillel with a tremendous building. Our Hillel Rabbi has remained a close personal friend, and mentor." His Junior year he met Susan Remick, who is now his wife, and they were married in 1977 the day after his graduation. No one else did the Judaic studies major so Topek wrote a format for it. "She was a year behind me, and she wanted to do the same thing, but she wanted to focus more on literature and language. The Hillel director told her to talk to me and find out how I did it. He also told me I should talk to her, so I did, and two years later we got married... We were from different towns [He was from Houston and she

was from Dayton, Ohio] and we didn't want to go to one city or the other where one of the families would be guests. So we got married at Hillel. It was neutral territory."

After college he enrolled immediately at Brandeis for their Near Eastern Judaic Studies program, planning to get a Ph.D. in Judaic studies, thinking he would become a professor. But after two years he got a masters degree and decided to get a job. He knew that down the line he would be back in academia again. At Brandeis he learned about a job opening as director at a small Hillel at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, a commuter campus. "Essentially it was one of these one-man-show type things where here was a Hillel that was OK but needed a lot of work.... I saw it as a real challenge for me to come in there and do something. What I really wanted was to learn how to be a Jewish professional without someone breathing down my neck and without dealing with the bureaucracy of being in a big agency where every time I needed a stamp or a paper towel I would have

to ask somebody and they would have to fill out a requisition for it." Sixty miles from Richmond is the University of Virginia where they also had just hired another Hillel director. Topek and that director helped one another and would go to the national office in nearby Washington to train. He learned the ropes at the Richmond Hillel. One thing that inspired Topek to continue his career as a Hillel director were the retirement speeches at the annual Hillel conference. "For a couple of them [Hillel directors] that was the only job they had ever had, and there were testimonials given to them by generations of students whose lives they had touched and changed and of faculty members they had gotten to know at the university.... Here at the university we celebrate the intellectual life and what I was able to see with these people who were retiring from Hillel was that they had such an impact on the life of a particular community; like Morris Goldfarb who was at Cornell for thirty-five years and every Jew who went to Cornell in the years that he was there, unless they were oblivious to being Jewish, knew this man, had been at his home and met his family and were somehow influenced by him along the way.

That inspired me.... You have to be careful though. Hillel is not a personality cult. It is an organization, and an agency. It can't revolve around the personality of one person. But if as a professional you decide that you want to devote your life to working in the Jewish community for a living, because it's a job you are not going to get paid a lot of money for, there have to be other rewards. Your other rewards have to come from your commitment to Judaism and to teaching people about Judaism and to helping them live a fuller Jewish life. You can do that without becoming a personality cult."

Topek realized that there were very few

Hillel directors who were not ordained rabbis and that he could not get ordained in Richmond because it had limited resources so he decided to look for another job. Stony Brook had an opening for a Hillel director in 1982, and is close to New York's rabbinical seminaries. It was a young Hillel, becoming a full foundation in 1974, but with a bigger budget and more students. Stony Brook had a reputation for having a lot of really involved Jewish students. "It



was a very last minute decision. I accepted the job on June 10th of 1982 and moved to Stony Brook on July 1st... literally within a few weeks. Our older child was two years old and we had another one on the way. My wife was seven months pregnant so it was a real strain. Not only that, but they had a house here that the Hillel director lived in and at the time my predecessor didn't live in the house, so graduate students had been living in it. The house needed to be renovated, but they couldn't do it in time for when we moved here, so we temporarily had to live in another house around the corner. We didn't arrive here real happy. We were coming to a place that was a lot colder and a lot different and we didn't have any friends or family here. We very quickly acclimated ourselves to the area, though, and have been here for fourteen years. Hillel is now running with four full-time staff people and a \$200,000 annual budget. We got our Hillel accreditation from national Hillel, which is a big step. Hillel has a Jewish Continuity Grant from UJA-Federation which is providing \$100,000 in three years to really "kick start" some very important outreach work... It is our

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The Sack

It was an old sack; it could have easily been mistaken for a rag. It was rather large in size, and had a rubber string sewn inside the interior of the folding which controlled the opening of the sack. It was made out of rough cotton which was intended to be white. It was now a grayish color. The name Solomon was knitted on the bottom left corners.

The sack was the sole possession that my Grandfather managed to take with him on his escape from Yemen's anti-Semitic government. He wanted to use the sack to store his food and bible since its gaudy impression was not going to attract the attention of thieves and wrongdoers. The sack was missing during the day only to be found on the kitchen table at night. As a young girl of seven, I remember watching my grandfather getting up at dawn to the sound of the rooster. After a hasty breakfast, he would set out to the yard where he picked apples which he placed inside the sac. He kissed my grandmother and I, took his cane and left for work. I remember watching him ascend the tall hill with difficulty and then disappearing into

the foggy mist that enveloped the town. In the evening, my grandfather returned home with the sack empty.

One day I yearned to find out why my grandfather left home with a sack full of fruits only to return with an empty one. I decided to follow my grandfather and see what he did with the sack. The following day, I woke up and waited impatiently for my grandfather's departure. When he finally left home, I went out the back door and proceeded after him. After the exhausting climb up the hill we reached town. There, my grandfather walked through the narrow streets leading to the shabbier part of town. After many turns we stopped in front of a small house.

The house was in a terrible condition. The paint was peeling off the walls, and the roof was leaking. My grandfather knocked on the door, left the sack, and immediately walked away. I remained hidden behind the tree to see what was going to happen. Minutes later, a woman walked out of the door with a frail looking baby in her arms and a toddler hanging to the folds of her dress. She looked

tiresome and weary. Her clothes were worn out and were covered with many patches that concealed holes. She reached for the blessed fruits that were in the sack. After feeding her baby, she left the sack on the doorstep where she found it. I believe I heard her say to herself and to her children that it was God's messenger who brought the fruit. Needless to mention how proud I was of my grandfather's benevolent deed.

My grandfather's heartwarming deed never left my mind. Years later, after my grandfather had passed away, I decided to see what had happened to the young woman and her children. When I arrived at the neighborhood, I learned that the wrecked house was no longer there. Instead, a single apple tree stood with all its glory; filled with apples and fresh green leaves. Two boys were climbing on its branches while their mother was resting beneath its shade. When I inquired about them at a nearby market, I was told that the once poor widowed woman was selling apples for a living.

-Alona Klarfeld

“Rediscovering Your Promised Land”

Underneath the factory-made jeans and suits; behind the dust clouds of appointments, deadlines, and responsibilities,

There is an embracing warmth in dancing candles and familiar echoes of song. A reunion: never forgotten ancestors with every bite of

that yellow bread. Velvet words of peace — wishing welcome and farewell in one soft thought.

David need not be worn on walls for eyes to see or necks to touch; doorways may even be barren of it to kiss.

For if you want to come

Home, you're Home! Just look between the raindrops, and the course of Night and Day; just notice the stitches of you and heritage woven forever.

You see? Just by removing your layers, your long journey will have brought you Here to stay.

-Sheri Jacobs

Kaddish For Yitzchak Rabin

To say that I respected you
is not enough
To say that your nation respected you
is not enough
To say the Nobel prize is yours
is not enough
To close my eyes and mourn
is not enough

Like mighty Hercules
rising on his funeral pyre ascending
to
join the
others of Olympus
We watch as you rise among the
[ranks
of the famous
or infamous
or even cruel
My children will learn your name
from a history book
Or maybe a street corner
near the UN
around the corner from
Dag Hammerskjold Plaza
or maybe a statue erected in the
[park
across the street
Millions will come to know your
[name
your heroic acts of peace from
Camp David
to
Washington
The first native son leader
of a tiny nation

You changed the climate of a world
we can't control
we want to control
You brought the plight of your
[people
to the nightly news
You forced us the American Jews
to look inside ourselves
to find our hearts
to make decisions
to feel compassion

We questioned your sanity
when you dealt with Anwar Sadat
he died too
we questioned your morals
when you shook hands with Yasser
[Arafat
a handshake from the front page
of every newspaper
In the hostile Arid desert climate
You reached forth the olive branch of
peace
You transcended traditional prejudice
like a Dove sailing over the sea
You made us realize that there is hope
of maybe someday all of us coming
[together
in peace
not just Arab and Jew
but Black and White
Moslem and Catholic
Serb and Croat
Tibetan and Chinese
Your voice was not just the voice of
[your people
it was a voice for the planet to listen to

a voice for everyone of us to learn from
a voice to give us strength and hope as
we prayed to give us strength and hope
strength and hope

Like an abrupt muzzle
bullets flashed and silenced you
bullets from within
Jewish Bullets



Photo from The Rabin Memoirs

A weapon full of hate set to cut you
down
Mutinous bullets
Terrible bullets
A shot so loud so harsh
has not been heard since my grandmother
was shot point-blank
kneeling by a ditch
Or my great aunt was shot
trying to survive an icy grave
Blasts louder than those on the El-Al jets
These were Jewish Bullets
Jewish Bullets
that snapped the olive branch in two

I was walking in the park yesterday
and I found crumpled and dead
a dove
its skin was pure as snow
its heart was as broken as its wings
I picked it up and buried it
beneath the branches of
a nearby olive tree
I went back to the gravesite today

the tree had withered
and the dove had been exhumed and
eaten
all that was left were the bones
Jewish Bullets

I want to reach out my hand and pluck
my heart out
Broken and useless
confused and shocked
sad and angry
We did this to ourselves
a form of self-mutilation
an act of mutiny
We could fall from the edge topple
over
and
fall fall fall
We are not a whole anymore
We need to be one to survive
Ex Pluribus Unum
Across language barriers
across oceans, rivers
plains, mountains,
hills, valleys
We are one people

Now we are a broken people
scattered about the field
like fallen fruit rotting in the sun
Golden Calves spring up in our
[midst
as often as wine is
drunk on Shabbat
Divided and separate
like Judah and Israel
when we were exiled
and sent on a journey that for many
of us has yet to end

Like a voice within blindness'
[endless night
you were there
Like Prometheus' gifts
you were there
A homing beacon a lighthouse
you were there
Like manna in the desert
you were there

To those who thought Kahane was right
look at the state we are in now
mourning
headless chickens running about till we
[collapse
bumping into walls
blind and deaf
Mourning
wearing torn clothes unshaven
praying for forgiveness
Not only was our voice stifled
but our fire was quenched
Our hope
our hope for peace remains still a
dream

To say that I respected you
is not enough
To say that your nation respected you
is not enough
To say the Nobel prize is yours
is not enough
To close my eyes and mourn
is not enough

-Jonathan Huebsch

Censorship on The Net

A great deal of confusion and simmering anger erupted when President Clinton signed the Telecommunications Bill which overhauls regulation on the media, phone companies, cable and the Internet. Civil Liberties groups have filed claims in court arguing that the legislation affecting the Internet violates, the first, fourth, fifth, and ninth Amendments. The bill criminalizes correspondence (private e-mail) to or among individuals under the age of 18 that is deemed "patently offensive" or "indecent." The American Civil Liberties Union and Planned Parenthood are also suing on a "First Amendment" infringement that criminalizes the distribution of information by "any express company or other common carriers" that assist people in having an abortion. The Justice Department has stated that it will not prosecute anyone until the Federal Court in Pennsylvania has had a chance to rule on the restraining order.

The challenge raised by the ACLU and other plaintiffs, contest that the government's regulation of electronic communication violates freedom of speech and privacy. Under the current law, the Federal Communications Commission regulates and sets standards of decency, which are limited to broadcast media such as radio and television. The Internet,

however, is an amphibious creature, fitting into the grey area of the law. It plays a dual role, as an electronic hub for mail and information, and as a service provider.

Senator Exxon's amendment regulating the Internet has drawn fire from the ACLU and other civil liberties groups for being rash and undefined. The ACLU argues that the legislation ignores other ways of helping parents control what their children see and hear. A computerized lock out feature is currently provided on most on-line services. This software gives parents control over the sites that their children are visiting. For on-line services that do not offer parental control, computer programs such as Cyberpatrol effectively lock out sites that are not for minors. Bill Burrington assistant council for America On-line, the largest consumer on-line service, has stated in an article in the New York Times questioning government regulation, asking whether it is "going to be the individual's choice, or the Government mandating what people can see?" If the Government does regulate how far will it reign in a person's right to free speech? Allowing the Federal Communication Commission to interpret "decency," according to the ACLU would cross over the line banning child pornography, and paedophilia. Under current guidelines, the

Federal Communication Commission can forbid the usage of,

"common Anglo-Saxon street terms for sexual or excretory functions, as well as sexual innuendos and double entendres. In addition, the Commission has ruled that communications with substantial literary, artistic, political, scientific, or other educational or social value, may be "patently offensive" or "indecent.""

The ACLU fears that a reticence to discuss issues that fall into the Federal Communication Commission's guideline will stifle the intellectual climate. The Internet is unregulated and has no centralized distribution supporting over 40 million users spread throughout 159 countries. It functions by linking a large number of smaller networks set up by universities, industry, nonprofit organizations, and government. College professors, students businessmen and government officials use the internet every day to communicate ideas freely that may be raw and unrefined. In the ACLU's legal brief, they state that their site contains adult subject matter and vulgar language. Examples that the ACLU cites include: copies of ACLU's court briefs in

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Is Smoking Allowed For Jews ?

Is smoking allowed for Jews? That is to say, is the act of smoking cigarettes allowed under Halakha (Jewish law?) In the Fall 1994 issue of "Jewish Action" (vol. 55, #1), there is an article by Rabbi Abraham Twerski, M.D. He points out that first and foremost, the Torah commands: "Be extremely protective of your lives" (Devarim 4:16) and "Guard your life" (Devarim 4:9)

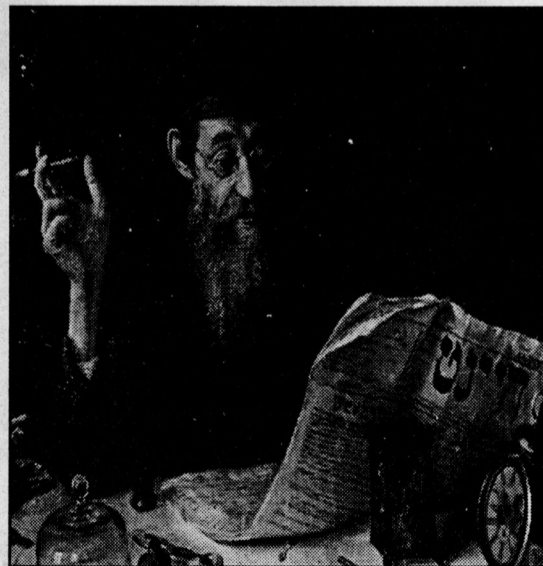
In his famous code of law, the Mishnah Torah, the Rambam (aka Moses ben Maimon, or Maimonides) devotes the entire Chapter 11 (of the laws pertaining to murder and protection of life) to the fact that a person may not subject himself to danger, nor do anything that is harmful to his health.

Rabbi Twerski correctly points out that this is clear and binding Torah law, and says "I cannot understand, I really cannot, how people who claim to be observant of Torah, who will not drink milk that is not supervised...can allow themselves to smoke cigarettes when it has been established beyond a shadow of a doubt that cigarettes are poisonous." Obviously, any attempt to allow Jews to smoke are invalid, as they directly violate both the Oral and Written Torah.

Rabbi Twerski closes his article by saying: "Cigarette smoking causes disease and death. "Those who have the capacity to eliminate a wrong and do not do so, bear the responsibility for its consequences". These are harsh words, but they are not mine. They are the words of the Talmud, Tractate Shabbat 54b."

Incredibly, today there are still many Jews who smoke cigarettes. We now know that nicotine is a drug that is even more addictive than cocaine, and that smoking causes hundreds of thousands of fatal cancers. Despite this, both secular and religious Jews can be seen violating the Torah and virtually committing suicide.

A thought: I'm sure our enemies rejoice each time a Jew dies; Do we really want to help our enemies by killing ourselves?



What can be done to stop this tide of virtual suicide? The first step is to keep in mind the commandments of the Torah: "Be extremely protective of your lives" and "Guard your life".

However, as much as people may want to guard their lives, many people will still find it difficult to actually quite smoking; As nicotine is a very addictive drug, this is to be expected. A good way to help is through education: Learn about the effects of smoking. Read. Even better, visit a cancer ward and an emphysema ward at the Hospital, and take a good hard look at the rewards of tobacco. You will find that this is a lot more informative than a pamphlet or magazine article.

Finally, education and intent are not always enough. You will need a support system on three levels: Friends, family, and God. You see your friends on a daily basis. Let them

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Frequently Asked Questions about Judaism

This column will deal on a regular basis with some of the most frequently asked questions about Jews, Judaism, and Jewish history. Many of these questions and answers are drawn from an enormously popular newsgroup on the Internet: soc.culture.jews. This newsgroup is available to anybody who has Internet access and a Usenet newsgroup reader, such as WINVN, Trumpet, or Netscape. Each day hundreds of people join this group to ask questions, give answers, and generally discuss every facet of Judaism that is imaginable. As new people join all the time, it happens that many questions are asked on a regular basis. To deal with this, many people who frequent the newsgroup got together and compiled a public domain frequently asked questions list, so that people could refer to the list for the basics. I'll draw from this resource. This issue we will deal with some of the most fundamental of questions:

Question: One of the most common questions is: What exactly are the differences between all the Jewish movements?
Answer: The three major denominations in Judaism are, in alphabetical order, Conservative Judaism, Orthodox Judaism, and Reform Judaism.

Outside of the United States and Israel, the distinction tends to be along Orthodox/Liberal lines. Outside of North America the equivalent of North American Reform Judaism is called Progressive or Liberal Judaism. Outside of North America the equivalent of North American Conservative Judaism is called "Masorti", although there are differences in all cases from the North American versions. In Israel, the Conservative and Reform movements are very small (although they do exist).

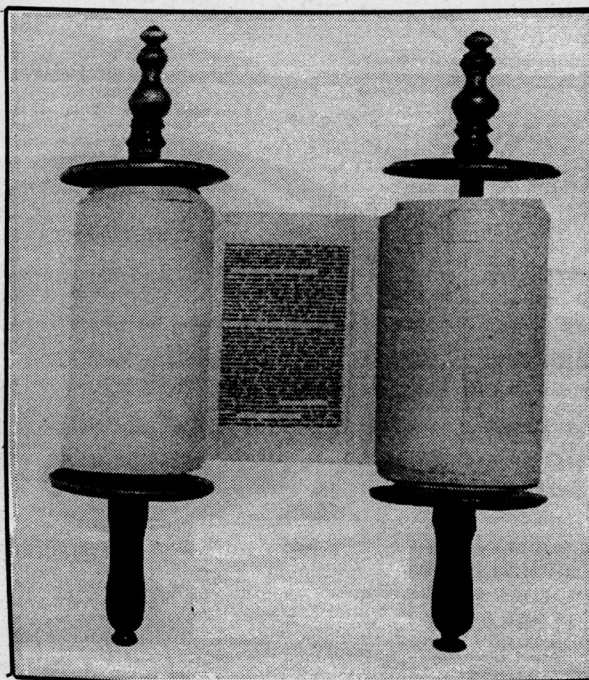
Question: What is normative, or Halakhic Judaism?

Normative, or halakhic, Judaism is a broad term for any Jewish lifestyle that holds Jewish law - Halakha - as binding. The Conservative, Traditional and Orthodox movements are all examples of normative Judaism. Within normative Judaism, the Hebrew Bible - The Tanakh - is the basis of Jewish laws, and the explanations of how the laws are to be followed and developed are found within the documents which record the Oral Law (Various Midrashim, the Mishna and the Talmud.)

Throughout history, there have been various codes of law that have been accepted by the Jewish community, such as Maimonides's "Mishneh Torah", Rabbi Jacob ben Asher's "Arba'ah Turim", and Rabbi Jo-

seph Karo's "Shulkhan Arukh".

Even in the most orthodox of homes, these codes of law are not followed to the letter - nor are they supposed to be followed as such. Instead, in each generation questions arise as to how a certain law should be implemented - if at all - and the rabbis of the day decide on the appropriate answer. The responsa of modern rabbis to questions about the traditional codes of law defines how Jews live.



It should be noted that some Orthodox Jews claim that only Orthodox Judaism is normative, while others are more open and admit that any Jew who holds Halakha as binding is normative.

Question: What is Conservative Judaism?

Answer: Conservative Judaism attempts to combine a positive attitude toward modern culture, acceptance of critical secular scholarship regarding Judaism's sacred texts, and also commitment to Jewish observance. Conservative Judaism believes that scholarly study of Jewish texts indicates that Judaism has constantly been evolving to meet the needs of the Jewish people in varying circumstances, and that a central halakhic authority can continue the halakhic evolution today.

How Conservative Judaism deals with Halakha:

Conservative Judaism affirms that the halakhic process reflects Divine will, yet allows for some individual autonomy as a result of a pluralistic approach to halacha. Conservative Judaism's pluralism derives from the fact that the central halakhic authority of the movement, the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards, will often set out more than one acceptable

position. In such a case, the rabbi of the congregation (mara d'atra) is free to choose from the range of acceptable positions, and his congregation is expected to abide by his choice.

For the past few centuries, most rabbis had done little more than offer a ruling on the opinion of a rabbi who lived before him. With the rare exceptions of a few Torah giants, wide ranging rabbinic legislation had died out a few centuries after the Talmud was codified. Today, Conservative rabbis have reclaimed the Talmudic prerogative of dealing with Jewish law. It should be noted that within the movement laws are only changed within the system of halakha, using Halakhic guidelines that are based in the Oral and Written law.

The Theology of Conservative Judaism:

Conservative Judaism hold that the laws of the Torah and Talmud are of divine origin, and thus mandates the following of Halakha (Jewish law). At the same time, the Conservative movement recognizes the human element in the Torah and Talmud, and accepts modern scholarship which shows that Jewish writings also show the influence of other cultures, and in general can be treated as historical documents.

Basically, the philosophy in a nutshell is that God is real, and that God can somehow make His will known to man through revelation. The revelation at Sinai was the clearest and most public of such divine revelations, but revelation also took place with other people - called prophets - and in a more subtle form, can even happen today.

The movement's biggest challenge is increasing the amount of observance among its laity. Only a fraction of people who call themselves Conservative Jews actually are shomer shabbat and keep kosher. Many people misinterpret Conservative Judaism as being like Reform Judaism except with more Hebrew in it services; Therefore they believe that if one simply goes to a Conservative synagogue then one is a Conservative Jew. This of course is not true, and the movement's leadership is strongly concerned with whether or not the next generation of Conservative Jews will have the commitment to lead an authentic Jewish lifestyle.

Question: What is Orthodox Judaism ?

Answer: Orthodox Judaism is not a unified movement with a single governing body, but rather many different movements adhering to common principles. All of the Orthodox move-

Topek (Continued from page 7)

responsibility to make sure that the Jewish community is pluralistic because the Jews on this campus are vastly different from one another. We have a lot of students from very different backgrounds, Russians, Persians, Israelis, those who were born in the United States, those whose parents were born here; people from the city and people from the country."

I asked him to tell me a funny story: "One of the funniest things, was when many years ago we started doing a Purim page in Shelanu. We would write these bogus articles and try to make it look real. We identified it as a Purim page. We even put a disclaimer in very, very fine print.... We got a hold of an old file photo of the Health Sciences Center that was then under construction. So you had the picture of a steel frame with nothing on it, but it was nineteen stories high with a big crane on top. We got a picture and stuck it in Shelanu. We wrote an article that said that this was the picture of the new Hillel building under construction and it was being built on the site of the former Stony Brook Union, which had been torn down. This building was going to be the most magnificent Hillel building in the country at nineteen stories high. It was going to have a swimming pool, and a mikvah, a ritual

bath. It was going to have the following synagogues: Orthodox, Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform, and "the synagogue that I wouldn't be caught dead in." The eating options were going to be kosher meat restaurant, kosher dairy restaurant, kosher Chinese, and non-kosher Chinese. We put all this stuff in the article and we made it sound real. We even made up the name of the contracting company and we made up the name of somebody building it, and we made up the name of somebody it would be named after. We printed the paper. A couple of days later the phones started ringing. People were calling up and saying, 'I'd like to tour the new building when its ready.' or 'I looked around campus but I didn't see it. Could you please tell me where it is.' The next week I walked into the Shabbat morning service on campus and there was a woman there who comes to the service every week.... After services she walked up to me and said, 'Well congratulations.' By then it had died down so I said, 'Why thank you very much. What are you congratulating me for?' She said, 'On your new building. I cant wait until we can hold services in one of those five synagogues.' I said, 'You don't understand. It was a joke.' She said, 'What do you mean a joke. I saw the article.' I said,

'It was on the Purim page.' She said, 'I don't care what page it was on, I want to come to the building.' It was a lot of fun to write this stuff and it was even more funny to see people's reaction to it because they believed it."

Topek's hobbies include antique cars, reading mystery novels, Jewish ethics, and the American Civil War. "I have an antique car that I'm restoring, a 1938 Studebaker. I've had it for about eight years. My work is progressing exceedingly slow. The car is mostly dismantled all over my garage and basement, but one day I will drive it to campus.... Mostly I work on it during the summers."

"I'm interested in the Civil War in general, but there is not very much material on how the Jews were involved in the Civil War. What there is I've read. Although, Jewish involvement in the Civil War was high for the number of Jews in the population. There were only about 150,000 Jews in the United States in 1861 but somewhere around 10,000 - 12,000 served between the Union and Confederate armies. Some reached relatively high rank, and there are some really interesting stories. I've spent a lot of time reading diaries and letters and things like that. I've always liked history."

-Adam Rattiner

Quest (Continued from page 11)

ments are very similar in their observance and beliefs, differing only in the details that are emphasized. They also differ in their attitudes toward modern culture and the state of Israel. They all share one key feature: a dedication to Torah, both Written and Oral. The Origin of Orthodox Judaism:

Historically, there was no such thing as Orthodox, Conservative, or Reform Judaism. The creation of Orthodoxy was a response to the challenge made by the Reformers. (And you might guess this: The Conservative movement was made by people who rejected the extremes of both positions)

Orthodox Judaism views itself as the continuation of the beliefs and practices of normative Judaism, as accepted by the Jewish nation at Mt. Sinai and codified in successive

generations in an ongoing process that continues to this day.

The Theology of Orthodox Judaism:

Orthodox Judaism believes that both the Written and Oral Torah are of divine origin, and represent the word of God. This is similar to the view of the Conservative movement, but the Orthodox movement holds that such information (except for scribal errors) is the exact word of God, and does not represent any human creativity or influence. Whereas Conservative Jews believe that the Torah is a human record of the encounter with the divine, Orthodox Jews see the Torah more or less as a direct quote from God. (This is over simplifying things; Orthodox Jews do not believe that God has a 'mouth' and of course do not believe that God 'spoke' to Moses in the usual

sense of the word.)

How Orthodox Judaism deals with Halakha:

For the Orthodox, the term "Torah" refers to the "Written Law" as interpreted by the "Oral Law", interpreted in turn by the Rishonim (Medieval commentators), and eventually codified in the Codices of Jewish Law. The most important codes of law are Maimonides's "Mishneh Torah", Rabbi Joseph Karo's "Shulkhan Arukh", and Rabbi Moshe Isserlis's "Mapah" (which is always printed as addendum to the Shul'han Arukh). This varies from Conservative Judaism in that Orthodox rabbis view these codes of laws as binding in almost all cases, while Conservative rabbis often use them as a starting point, but often

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Smoke (Continued from page 10)

know that you are quitting, and that you are counting on them for their help. Although you may see your family less often than your friends, you need your family too; Their support is invaluable.

Ultimately, the source of all our strength is God, and it is to God whom we turn in our prayers. The rabbis have taught that tefila (prayer) is how we communicate with God, and how we refine ourselves. In this vein,

it should be noted that one of the main points in any twelve step program for quitting substance abuse is admitting that we need the help of a higher power to overcome our inner weaknesses; Nicotine addiction is no exception. This is exactly what tefila is all about. Many people are under the misconception that God needs us to pray to him. This is not true at all, and throughout the ages the rabbis have pointed out that the opposite is in fact true. We pray to

God not because he needs us, but because we need him. Through the introspection that tefila encourages, we can gain a clearer understanding of the obstacles in life, and gain the strength needed to deal with them.

It can be hard road one takes when one resolves to break their nicotine addiction, but when one does so one's gain is truly immeasurable.

-Robert D. Kaiser

Bosnia: A Personal Narrative

This story is based on the life of Eldin Trebincevic.

It was an April's evening when I left the coffee club, thinking about meeting my friends the following day. That was the night fighting broke out in Bosnia. The capital of Sarajevo was already in war since April 5th, and somehow, I was expecting that any moment it would spread to Brcko, my home city. I could feel the intensity in the air, but at the same time I could not imagine that something like death could really happen to me.

April 30, 1992 was the day that evil entered my home city of Brcko, (which is located northeast of Bosnia.) At 4:45 a.m. two immense explosions shook the city. Two bridges connecting Bosnia and Croatia were destroyed. I remember that I woke up and felt something was going to happen. I did not know exactly what to expect, but I had a bad feeling. When the explosions under the bridges were triggered, I immediately jumped from my bed and called to my younger brother, "Get up, hurry, get dressed, It is over..." My family and I did not know what to do; the entire city was in chaos and utter disorder. I left my apartment and went outside to see what was going on in the streets of the city. There was a lot of broken windows, shattered glass, and some remains of roofs which could be found on the cement. I started down the street to see the destroyed bridges, but at the last moment I could not bring myself to see that site. My father decided to go and see the effects of the bombs. He witnessed the ghastly remains of the bodies of people on the bridge at the time of the explosion. They were literally everywhere; on the nearby trees, roofs etc ...

Throughout the day I spoke on the phone with my friends. We tried to guess what was going to happen next, but no one dared to say anything regarding the death that surrounded us. They were similar to the ones we have seen on the movies about the Holocaust. We hoped that everything was going to be O.K., especially since the Serbs lived among us, and we lived in a multi-ethnic society.

That night the fighting broke everywhere. The worst news came from the southern and western district of the city. Nationalistic Serbs knew that those areas were heavily populated with mostly

Bosnian and Croatian people. It was only about one kilometer away from my home. Shortly afterwards, the entire city was occupied by the serbs' paramilitary troops. Brcko was occupied from before by the Yugoslav National Army. When the Bosnian people got their independence from Yugoslavia, The Yugoslav National Army was ordered to leave, which they refused to do. The Serbs from Yugoslavia wanted to create a Greater Serbia, meaning they want Serbia only for the Serbs, no other nationalities.

A few days later, my karate coach and my good friend who was a Serb ordered me to leave my home in two hours. My mother asked, "Where," to which he replied, "I do not care." How could my friend turn so cruel? How could they turn their back on years of friendship? He was just one of millions who believed in the Greater Serbian dream.

Days followed sleepless nights and the sound of the loading of the dead. There were many sanitation trucks and each day they left with more piles of corpses, which were dumped into pile holes in the city's suburbs. The bloody feast was going on in a nearby river port which was turned into big concentration camp. It was just 200 meters from my home.

As soon as we packed our few belongings, My family and I left our home and memories of 20 years behind. We rushed for safety, without even taking a last glimpse at what we used to call home. We found ourselves at the doorsteps of my Aunt's house who lived ten minutes away. I never imagined that my life would never be the same. It was part of my life which I will never forget. It was a horrible experience for anyone to go through.

By chance we caught the bus leaving for Vienna. It was going to pass through Serbia, but there was no other alternative. We succeeded in passing through the first check point, but at the second check point we were forced out of the bus and driven into a concentration camp. After every night that went by, some men disappeared, never to be seen again. I was glad to be

awake in the morning, knowing that I was still alive. But that was only momentary, for the light made me frightened at the prospect of being ordered outside. After three weeks we were transported to the river port, where men were taken away. Separated from my mother and brother, I thought I would never see them



again. Trails of blood led me to this horrible camp, where executions were held and I was without food for five days. On the tenth day we were released only to find our home looted. Luckily, we were reunited with my mother and brother. During that time we were living on vegetable oil and a piece of bread. In the end, 10,000 people from my hometown of Brcko were slaughtered. My family managed to get the bus leaving for Vienna, Austria.

I couldn't bring myself to look back, a last look at my home city. I knew that the only thing that was left would stain my image of home before the war. An entire community of people was wiped out, erased as if it never existed before. If asked to reflect on this Holocaust I can only cry out for the world to remember the genocide of my people. It could have been you out there, your friends, your loved ones. Remember, Never Forget!!!

-Alona Klarfeld

Quest (Continued from page 13)

refer back to the Talmud before actually ruling on a subject.

As practical questions arise, Orthodox

Authorities apply the Halakhic process (the system of legal reasoning and interpretation described in the Oral Torah) using the Torah (both Oral and Written) to determine how best

to live in accordance with G-d's will as directed by the Halacha. In this way, Orthodoxy evolves to meet the demands of the times.

-Robert Kaiser

Judges (Continued from page 5)

successful political leader. No member of the Nation of Islam is in any political office in this country. Douglass said he doesn't understand why he becomes the focus of the meetings between Blacks and Jews. Hornblass spoke about the plight of African Americans and all the things the Jews and Blacks have in common. He said, "One in every four Black adult males in New York is in the criminal justice system (in California it is one in three). These young people in the system have no backing, and they need attention so they commit a crime. We need to help these people."

"Martin Luther King was able to change the agenda of the Jewish people." He explained that before King we were shameful in this country to express ourselves as Jews. The success of the Civil Rights Movement showed Jews that they could also be successful. He said "pain is pain," and that "we should be sensitive to people who are relatives of slaves and sensitive to people with relatives who died in the Holocaust. These two groups have suffered in recent history." Hornblass saw Farrakhan on television the night before the

meeting and he said that "it was scary." Farrakhan had just come back from Iraq and Iran and Farrakhan spoke about the "Devil in America." Another thing he said was "scary" was the fact that a man is now running for president who has defended Nazis, and talks maliciously about "New York Bankers." Hornblass was probably referring to Patrick Buchannon. He said "there is a need for people of good will in this country." People on college campuses need to explore and relate with other cultures more and that people should not just stick to their own group.

The chairman of the African American Studies department, William McAadoo, went to the Million Man March (some people saw the march as being a pro-Farrakhan event) himself and he said that the "march was not about Farrakhan." He asked, "Why do you think Rosa Parks was at the march?" He explained that the whole community was involved in the march and that it is not possible to show the civil rights movement of his own generation to the generation of today. In a way the march was a part of the new generation's civil rights

movement. He said "We have to learn to reach them in their time."

Janet Hanson, a professional civil rights consultant, asked why Jews spoke about "Jews involvement in the Civil Rights Movement." She asked why if we are going to consider those statistics, why not also consider Jewish involvement in other areas such as Hollywood, and the education system. Hanson expressed that she didn't mean to sound anti-Semitic.

Douglass replied that "Jews opened the doors of the entertainment business to blacks...Neither of us control Chase Manhattan or Bank America." He said that he personally knew the owners of some black businesses that are funded with Jewish money.

Hornblass said that despite the rumor that there are so many Jewish doctors and lawyers, "there was a quota on Jews in medical schools and other schools until the 1950s." He said that to this day there are major banks and insurance companies that exclude Jews and Blacks.

-Adam Rattiner

Scholar (Continued from page 5)

came to The United States to teach at Friend's institution, Chicago State University.

During his stay in America, Xu studied Jewish culture; he read books as well as learning first hand by attending a Bat Mitzvah, participating in a seder, and going to High Holiday services. As he learned more about the Judaism, he realized Chinese and Jewish culture contain many similarities. He spoke of this at an oneg shabbat.

In order to reach the next plateau in his pursuit of knowledge, Xu made his first trip to Israel. He explained that to the Chinese, Israel was "an alien and mysterious country, even more so than the countries of the Western hemisphere." What little they did know about Is-

rael was perceived in a negative light. The Chinese even felt that Israel was completely to blame for the Arab-Israeli conflicts.

After his trip to Israel, he took his newfound knowledge and created the China Judaic Studies Association to further Jewish studies in China. In addition to publishing articles and teaching University courses in Judaism, Xu also completed a one volume Encyclopedia Judaica in 1994.

The Encyclopedia which is written in Chinese and English consists of photographs of familiar faces such as Sigmund Freud, Theodor Herzl, Golda Meir, Albert Einstein, and Leonard Bernstein. There are also color photographs of Israel and Jewish customs such

as the blowing of the shofar and Jews praying at the Western Wall. Xu even added photos of Jewish artifacts from his own collection, such as kiddush cups and shabbat candleholders.

Xu has also translated works by Singer, Heller, Mailer and Odets into Chinese. His knowledge in both Chinese and Judaic studies should prove to be both interesting as well as enlightening. I look forward to his presentation, his insight, and perhaps the chance to understand one another a little better.

—This article is based on the work entitled "The China/Judaic Connection" by Beverly Friend, Executive Director of the Chinese Judaic Studies Association.

-Jennifer Nazer

Net (Continued from page 10)

cases involving obscenity, arts censorship, discrimination against gays and lesbians. Notably, the ACLU has posted the text of the "seven dirty words" comic monologue which the Supreme Court ruled "indecent" in the 1978 Pacifica case. The ACLU also hosts unmoderated online discussion groups that debate a variety of civil liberties issues. A lot of what is said in these discussion groups have sexual content or vulgar language; for

example, a discussion of masturbation in the context of the firing of former Surgeon General Jocelyn Elders, the content of Howard Stern's best-selling book, Private Parts; a discussion of why the word "fuck" has such expressive power; and a discussion of the defense of pornography and other erotic expression under the First Amendment.

The court's decision will set the scope of government action curtailing free speech via

the Internet. A negative outcome would create a free fall in the communications world and endanger other protected media such as the press. It sets a precedence that the government will follow in the near future. The danger grows exponentially larger when the press starts going on-line, and runs into conflicting Federal Communication Commission guidelines limiting areas of discussion.

-David Drits

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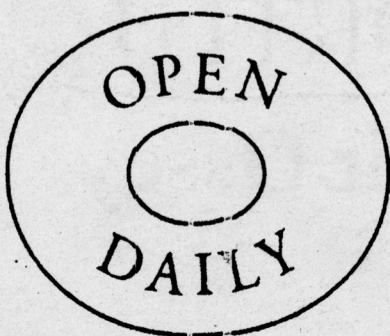


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