

UCIRVINE | PROGRAM IN JEWISH STUDIES

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



This past year has been a good year for Jewish Studies at UC Irvine. Thanks to the Teller Chair endowment, we were able to host an impressive array of speakers who came to Irvine to speak about their research and engage in conversations about Jewish Studies with students, faculty, and members of the wider community. We were privileged to host many events together with other units on campus, including a one-day conference on Judaism and Health co-sponsored with UCI's Department of Nursing Science, a lecture featuring the dean of Jewish Studies in China, Professor Xu Xin of Nanjing

University together with the History department, and other events together with the Persian Studies Center and European Studies and Languages. There is more exciting programming in the months to come, so check for announcements on our website or sign up for our e-mail list (sign up at <https://maillists.uci.edu/mailman/listinfo/uci-jewish-studies>).

Since I came to UC Irvine, the greatest pleasure has been to work with our wonderful students. Teaching a wide range of topics, our program offers a minor in Jewish Studies and draws a growing and diverse group of students who decide to take the classes that we offer. You will meet one of these fantastic students in these pages.

I am especially pleased that the Jewish Studies Program at UCI has been able to establish a close partnership with the Orange County Hillel, led by its energetic new director Daniel Y. Harris. We have organized events together and we look forward to many more years of cooperation to nurture an environment of Jewish learning, and learning about Judaism, on the UCI campus.

None of what we do—whether the public events we organize or support that we can offer our students—is possible without support from our friends in the wider community. I am pleased to acknowledge that the Rose Project of the Orange County Jewish Federation has pledged welcome support for our Israel Studies-related programming next year. Please consider becoming a supporter of Jewish Studies at UCI, at whatever level you feel comfortable, and feel free to contact me with any questions you might have at mlehmann@uci.edu, or write to the director of development in the School of Humanities, Nicole Balsamo, at nbalsamo@uci.edu.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthias Lehmann".

Matthias Lehmann, Teller Chair and Director of Jewish Studies

Upcoming Events 2013-2014

- **Adriana Brodsky (St. Mary's College of Maryland) and Mollie Nouwen (University of South Alabama):** "The Jews of Argentina" (November 4, 2013)
- **Devin Naar (University of Washington):** "Stones that Speak: The Life and Death of the Jewish Cemetery of Salonica" (January 30, 2014)
- **Julia Cohen (Vanderbilt):** "Modern Sephardi Jews and the Spanish Past" (April 7, 2014)

... and more events in preparation!
For updated on current and upcoming events visit www.humanities.uci.edu/jewishstudies/events/index.php

- **Focus on Israel Studies, with generous support from the Rose Project of the Jewish Federation and Family Services of Orange County**
- **Liora Halperin (University of Colorado), "Babel in Zion: Negotiating Language Diversity in Mandate Palestine"** (February 24, 2014)

... and a special event featuring Professor Michael Brenner (American University and University of Munich). Details to be announced.

EVENTS 2012-2013

Fall 2012

Anat Gilboa (Art historian, Irvine):
“Rembrandt and the Jews.”

Shaul Magid (Indiana University):
“Hasidism Incarnate: Hasidism and
the Christianization of Modern
Judaism.”

Amelia Glaser (UC San Diego):
“Jews and Ukrainians in Russia’s
Literary Borderlands.”

Winter 2013

Daniel Harris (OC Hillel):
“Post-Digital American Jewish
Poetry.”

Shira Klein (Chapman University):
“More Italian Than Mussolini.
Italian Jews from Emancipation to
World War II.”

Monique Balbuena (University of
Oregon): “Poetry in Ladino Today.
New Verse in an Old Language.”

Jason Mokhtarian (Indiana
University): “The Talmud in Ancient
Iran.” Co-sponsored with the UCI
Persian Studies Center.

Spring 2013

Anat Maor (visiting professor at
UCI) and Moshe Naor (visiting
professor at San Diego State
University): “A Window for Peace?
In the Wake of the Elections in
Israel and the Visit of President
Obama to the Middle East.”

David Myers (UCLA) and Xu Xin
(Nanjing University, China): “Jews
and Jewish Studies in China: Chinese
and American Perspectives.”

“Landscapes of Memory.” A
documentary about Ruth Kluger,
a survivor of Theresienstadt.
Film screening and discussion
with Ruth Kluger (UCI) and the
film maker Renata Schmidtkunz
(Vienna). Co-sponsored with the
UCI Department of European
Languages and Studies.

“Judaism and Health.” Joint
conference with UCI Nursing
Science. Keynote lecture by William
Cutler (Hebrew Union College-
Jewish Institute for Religion):
“Thinking about Death: Stories
and Rhymes about the End of
Our Time.” Presentations by Ellen
Olshansky (UCI), Tammi Schneider
(Claremont School of Religion) and
Rabbi Susan Leider.

“A Holocaust Survivor’s Lessons
Learned.” With Jack Pariser.
Co-hosted by OC Hillel.

“Sephardic Culture in Mexico.” With
Myriam Moscona, Author of Tela
de Sevoya. With the Department of
Spanish and Portuguese and support
from ADL Orange County and
Long Beach.

Miryam Segal (Queens College,
CUNY): “From Prophet to Worker.
Labor Politics and the Rise of
Women’s Poetry in Hebrew.”



Classes Offered for the Jewish Studies Minor

Antisemitism, the Longest Hatred	Lehmann	Winter 2014
California Jews	Katz	Spring 2013
Contemporary Israeli Politics	Maor	Spring 2013
Hebrew		Fall 2013, Winter and Spring 2014
History of Jews in Germany	Levine	Fall 2013
Introduction to Jewish Cultures	Lehmann	Fall 2013
Israel at Movies	Widlanski	Fall 2013
Israel in the American Imagination	Katz	Fall 2013
Italian Holocaust Literature	Chiampi	Spring 2013
Jewish Messiahs, Mystics, and Revolutionaries	Baer	Winter 2013
Jews in the Age of Discovery	Lehmann	Winter 2013
Modern Jewish History	Lehmann	Fall 2012
Politics and Media in Israel	Widlanski	Fall 2013
The American Jewish Experience	Katz	Winter 2013
The Holocaust	Moeller	Fall 2013
The Jews of Spain	Lehmann	Spring 2014
Three Religions, Three Thousand Years: Jerusalem	Lehmann	Winter 2013, Spring 2014
Women in Israel	Maor	Winter 2013
World Religions I	McKenna	Winter 2014

WE WELCOME YOUR SUPPORT

If you would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to support the Program in Jewish Studies, we now have a “Give Now” button located on the giving information page of our website: www.humanities.uci.edu/jewishstudies/. This button will take you directly to an online form through UC Irvine Advancement, earmarked for the Program in Jewish Studies. For more information on giving contact Nicole Balsamo, Director of Development, at 949-824-2923 or nbalsamo@uci.edu.

2013 Teller Chair Lecture

The 2013 Teller Chair Lecture was delivered by Professor Steven Weitzman, the Daniel E. Koshland Professor Jewish Culture and Religion and the director of the Taube Center for Jewish Studies at Stanford University. Professor Weitzman’s lecture, “Mining for Solomon,” explored the connections between history and myth in the story of the biblical king Solomon by focusing on the quest to understand how he became so wealthy. Recent archaeologists claim to have uncovered the possible source of that wealth, but they are not the first to believe they have made such a discovery. Recounting the history of this quest, Steven Weitzman spoke about the intersection between the story of the biblical king and his imagined counterpart, the Solomon of later Jewish and Christian fantasy.



Meet our Students



Deborah Lewis

When I transferred to UC Irvine two years ago, I knew along with majoring in English that I also wanted to minor in Jewish Studies. The program would not only fulfill my desire to learn Hebrew and to learn more about Judaism, but it also aided in the construction of my Honors thesis. Both the Jewish Studies program and the Humanities Honors Program enabled me to accomplish a goal that I have had since I was very young: to learn more about my family's history.

When my journey began, the only knowledge I had of my great great grandmother was that she brought a locket with her when she immigrated to America and that she died very young leaving her husband to admit their four children into an orphanage. With the grants I was awarded for my project, I was able to research in the Philadelphia Jewish Archives at Temple University and interview my great Aunt Esther, the eldest member of my family. Both the archives and my great aunt's memories revealed an orphanage she and her siblings grew up in, showing me the true heart of my paper. This orphanage, located in Philadelphia, was also known as America's first Jewish orphanage founded in 1855 by Jewish philanthropist Rebecca Gratz. With the orphanage's records and my aunt's memories, I analyzed the ideals and the realities of institutional life and found that it was not as Dickensian as one would think. My paper sought to understand the orphanage's place in the history of childcare

during this time period, how it fit in American Jewish history, and how it was a reflection of the Jewish community of Philadelphia.

Meet our Faculty

Emily Katz

Emily Alice Katz received a Ph.D. in modern Jewish studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary (2008) and was designated a Recent Doctoral Recipient Fellow of the Mellon Foundation and the American Council of Learned Societies' Early Career Fellowship Program. Dr. Katz's research focuses upon American Jewish history in the post-WWII era--particularly the history of American Jews as cultural patrons and consumers--and on the relationship between American Jews, the U.S., and Israel. She's been teaching on these subjects at UCI since 2010; this year, her offerings include the courses "Israel in the American Imagination" (Fall 2013) and "Afterlife of the Holocaust" (Spring 2014). Dr. Katz has published in such venues as *American Jewish History* and *Images: A Journal of Jewish Art and Visual Culture*; her first book, *Bringing Zion Home: Israel in American Jewish Culture, 1948-1967*, is forthcoming from SUNY Press. She is also a faculty mentor for the UCI chapter of the Olive Tree Initiative.

