

**The Mandel Center
for Studies in Jewish Education**

Teaching Rabbinic Literature

Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy

January 27-28, 2008

A research conference featuring
presentations by and discussions with
outstanding teachers of rabbinic literature
from diverse settings and multiple levels

**Hassenfeld Conference Center
Brandeis University**

Jon A. Levisohn, Conference Chair

About the Conference

This conference brings together teachers of rabbinic literature from colleges and universities, Jewish day schools, yeshivot and seminaries, synagogues, adult education and informal educational settings to explore research and develop ideas about the purposes and practices of teaching rabbinic literature.

In addition to providing an opportunity for participants to learn with and from one another, the conference seeks to promote the power and potential of the scholarship of teaching—especially studies of practice—for fostering a way of talking about what we do that is more reflective, more sophisticated about purposes, and more attuned to learning outcomes. The conference is designed to contribute to the further development of scholarship on the teaching of rabbinic literature through the publication of papers and presentations.

For more information about the conference, visit:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/centers/mandel/TeachingRabbinics.html>

About the Initiative on Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy

The subtitle of the conference, “Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy,” signals its relationship to the Mandel Center research project of which it is a part. The Bridging Initiative promotes the improvement of the teaching of Jewish studies in multiple settings, through research by and critical dialogue among scholars and teachers. The project is grounded in the following three convictions:

- Teachers of Jewish Studies share common questions and may productively engage in collaborative inquiries across settings and levels, even if they arrive at different answers.
- Jewish education ought not to be isolated from the academic pursuit of Jewish Studies scholarship.
- The subfields of Jewish Studies, such as Bible and rabbinic literature, will benefit from the development of a scholarship of teaching, much as has occurred in the fields of mathematics, history, and elsewhere.

For more information about the Bridging Initiative, visit:

<http://www.brandeis.edu/centers/mandel/bridginginitiative.html>

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CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

SUNDAY, JANUARY 27, 2008

8:00-9:00 am	REGISTRATION <i>Outside of Sherman Hall</i>
8:00-9:00 am	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST <i>Sherman Hall</i>
9:00-9:45 am	PLENARY 1: OPENING SESSION <i>Sherman Hall</i>
10:00-11:30 am	CONCURRENT SESSIONS A <i>See Conference Program starting on page 4 for locations.</i>
11:45 am-12:45 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS B <i>See Conference Program starting on page 5 for locations.</i>
1:00-2:30 pm	PLENARY 2: LUNCH SESSION <i>Sherman Hall</i>
2:45-3:45 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS C <i>See Conference Program starting on page 6 for locations.</i>
4:00-4:30 pm	EXPLORING THE ORIENTATIONS TO TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE: SYNTHESIS AND REFLECTIONS <i>Sherman Hall</i>
4:30-5:00 pm	BREAK <i>Sherman Hall</i>
5:00-6:30 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS D <i>See Conference Program starting on page 8 for locations.</i>
6:30-8:45 pm	PLENARY 3: DINNER SESSION <i>Sherman Hall</i>

CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

MONDAY, JANUARY 28, 2008

8:00-9:00 am	CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST <i>Sherman Hall</i>
9:00-10:45 am	PLENARY 4 <i>Sherman Hall</i>
10:45-11:15 am	BREAK <i>Sherman Hall</i>
11:15 am-12:15 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS E <i>See Conference Program starting on page 10 for locations.</i>
12:30-2:00 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS F: LUNCH SESSIONS <i>See Conference Program starting on page 12 for locations.</i>
2:15-3:15 pm	CONCURRENT SESSIONS G <i>See Conference Program starting on page 13 for locations.</i>
3:30-4:30 pm	PLENARY 5: CONFERENCE CONCLUSION <i>Sherman Hall</i>

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 27, 2008

8:00-9:00 am **REGISTRATION**
Outside of Sherman Hall

8:00-9:00 am **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Sherman Hall

9:00-9:45 am **PLENARY 1: OPENING SESSION**
Sherman Hall

Jon A. Levisohn (Brandeis University)
Sharon Feiman-Nemser (Brandeis University)

10:00-11:30 am **CONCURRENT SESSIONS A**

SESSION A1: TEACHING HALAKHA
Lurias

Rahel Berkovits (Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies),
TEACHING HALAKHA AND RESPECTING STUDENT AUTONOMY

Nathaniel Helfgot (Yeshivat Chovevei Torah),
A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TEACHING THE LAWS OF HOLIDAYS

Respondent: Jacob Cytryn (Brandeis University)

Chair: Daniel Reifman (Midreshet Lindenbaum)

SESSION A2: TEACHING MISHNAH
Geller

Claudia Marbach
(JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School),
*ENACTING THE MISHNAH:
TEACHING SKILLS AND ETHICS IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM*

Judd Kruger Levingston (Perelman Jewish Day School)
THE MORAL MISHNAH

Respondent: Avraham Walfish (Herzog College)

Chair: Jeffrey Spitzer (Gann Academy)

SESSION A3: TEACHING RABBIS

Levine-Ross

Yehuda Kurtzer (Harvard University),

RABBINIC JUDAISM FOR RABBINIC JEWS:

TEACHING ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY TO RABBINICAL STUDENTS

Aryeh Cohen (American Jewish University),

*SOME THINGS RABBIS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT MISHNAH AND TOSEFTA,
AND HOW THEY MIGHT LEARN THEM: A REPORT FROM THE FIELD*

Respondent: Susan P. Fendrick (Brandeis University)

Chair: Scott Bolton (Reuben Gittelman Hebrew Day School)

SESSION A4: TEACHING IN A BEIT MIDRASH

Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Orit Kent (Brandeis University),

CO-CONSTRUCTING MEANING: HEVRUTA IN THE DELET BEIT MIDRASH

Elie Holzer (Bar Ilan University),

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DESIGN A BEIT MIDRASH?

*(Instead of a presentation followed by a response and then discussion,
this session will provide opportunities for interaction. There will be no
respondent for this session.)*

Chair: Jane Kanarek (Hebrew College Rabbinical School)

11:45-12:45 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS B

SESSION B1:

Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Dov Linzer (Yeshivat Chovevei Torah),

LEARNING TO WEAR MANY HATS:

*INTEGRATING THE INTELLECTUAL, PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL IN A
RABBINIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM*

Respondent: Sharon Cohen Anisfeld
(Hebrew College Rabbinical School)

Chair: Marjorie Lehman (Jewish Theological Seminary)

SESSION B2:

Shapiro 313

Ellen Pildis and Dan Brosgol (The Rashi School),

THE INTRODUCTION OF MISHNAH TEACHING IN A REFORM JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Respondent: Rhonda Cohen (Hastings Public Schools)

Chair: Claudia Marbach (JCDS)

SESSION B3:

Levine-Ross

Pinchas Hayman (Bonayich Educational Services),
THE POWER OF SHINUN IN THE STUDY OF MISHNAH

Respondent: Moriah SimonHazani (University of Pennsylvania)

Chair: Deena Sigel (University of London)

SESSION B4:

Lurias

David Kraemer (Jewish Theological Seminary),
HOW COULD THE RABBIS DO THAT?:
DOMESTICATING THE STRANGE IN THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC LITERATURE

(Instead of a presentation followed by a response and then discussion, this session will provide opportunities for interaction. There will be no respondent for this session.)

Chair: Helen Plotkin (Swarthmore College)

SESSION B5:

Geller

Moshe Sokolow (Yeshiva University),
TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN RABBINIC LITERATURE:
THE OR HA-HAYIM ON PARSHANUT HA-MIKRA (BIBLICAL EXEGESIS)

Respondent: Aryeh Klapper (Gann Academy)

Chair: Shai Cherry (American Jewish University)

SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING, JANUARY 27, 2008

1:00-2:30 pm

PLENARY 2: LUNCH SESSION

Sherman Hall

David Stern (University of Pennsylvania),
THE TALMUDIC PAGE AND THE HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF TALMUD

Jon A. Levisohn (Brandeis University),
ORIENTATIONS TO THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC LITERATURE

2:45-3:45 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS C

SESSION C1: THE CONTEXTUAL ORIENTATION

Lurias

Yaron Eliav (University of Michigan),
ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF TALMUDIC LITERATURE

Respondent: Marc Brettler (Brandeis University)

Chair: Lisa Karp Wurtele (Tehiyah Day School)

SESSION C2: THE LITERARY ORIENTATION
Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Avraham Walfish (Herzog College),
*A LITERARY ORIENTATION TO TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE:
AN INQUIRY INTO ITS USE WITH ORTHODOX STUDENTS*

Respondent: Reuven Cohn (Maimonides School)

Chair: Elliot Kaplowitz (Brandeis University Hillel)

SESSION C3: THE TORAH/INSTRUCTION ORIENTATION
Levine-Ross

Jeffrey Schein (Siegel College),
*USING RABBINIC TEXTS AS PEDAGOGIC TRIGGERS:
FROM PEDAGOGY TO CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND BACK AGAIN*

Respondent: Benjamin Samuels
(Congregation Shaarei Tefillah)

Chair: Elyse Winick
(Koach, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism)

SESSION C4: THE CULTURAL STUDIES ORIENTATION
Shapiro 313

Gidon Rothstein (HAFTR),
*HELPING STUDENTS GET THEIR FEET IN THE DOOR:
GEERTZ' 'THICK DESCRIPTION' AND THE USE OF ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN THE
TEACHING OF RABBINIC TEXTS*

Respondent: Beth Berkowitz (Jewish Theological Seminary)

Chair: Mara Benjamin (Yale University)

SESSION C5: THE HALAKHIC/LEGAL ORIENTATION
Geller

Daniel Reifman (Midreshet Lindenbaum),
TEACHING TALMUDIC HERMENEUTICS USING A SEMIOTIC MODEL OF LAW

Respondent: Elie Holzer (Bar Ilan University)

Chair: Barry Wimpfheimer (Northwestern University)

4:00-4:30 pm

**EXPLORING THE ORIENTATIONS TO TEACHING
RABBINIC LITERATURE: SYNTHESIS AND REFLECTIONS**
Sherman Hall

4:30-5:00 pm

BREAK
Sherman Hall

5:00-6:30 pm **CONCURRENT SESSIONS D**

SESSION D1: TEACHING TALMUD

Lurias

Aryeh Klapper (Gann Academy),
*HOW SHOULD ETHICALLY CHALLENGING TEXTS BE TAUGHT? REFLECTIONS ON
STUDENT REACTIONS TO ACADEMIC AND YESHIVA-STYLE PRESENTATIONS*

Michael Chernick (HUC-JIR),
*BRISK, JACOB NEUSNER, AND THE STAM:
SIGNIFICANT METHODOLOGIES FOR MEANINGFUL TALMUD TEACHING AND STUDY*

Respondent: Lawrence Kaplan (McGill University)

Chair: Lisa Schlaff (SAR High School)

**SESSION D2:
PREPARING COMPELLING LEARNING SESSIONS**

Geller

Carl Perkins (Temple Aliyah),
*THE PEDAGOGY OF SERENDIPITY:
PRESENTING THE WEEKLY PARASHA THROUGH THE EYES OF RABBINIC TEXTS*

Elyse Winick (Koach, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism),
*MEDIATING THE TEXT AND FOSTERING ORGANIC DISCUSSION:
THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING RABBINIC-TEXT STUDY GUIDES*

Respondent: Elyse Goldstein
(Kolel: the Adult Learning Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning)

Chair: George Nudell (Congregation Beth Israel)

**SESSION D3:
STUDYING TEACHERS OF RABBINIC LITERATURE**

Levine-Ross

Karen G. Reiss Medwed (University of Pennsylvania),
*WHAT DO TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW TO TEACH TALMUD?
AN INQUIRY INTO TEACHER KNOWLEDGE*

Michael Gillis (Hebrew University),
*HOW DO TEACHERS' BACKGROUNDS IN STUDYING TALMUD AFFECT THEIR
TEACHING OF TALMUD? THREE PORTRAITS*

Respondent: Alex Sinclair (Shalom Hartman Institute)

Chair: Benjamin Mann (Solomon Schechter School of Manhattan)

SESSION D4: TEACHING ADULTS
Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Marcie Lenk (Harvard University),

LEARNING FROM ADULT LEARNERS:

WHAT STUDENTS CAN TEACH US ABOUT HOW TO TEACH RABBINICS

Jeffrey Rubenstein (New York University),

HOW SCHOLARSHIP CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PEDAGOGY:

*THE EXAMPLE OF THE SHIFTING SCHOLARLY PARADIGMS IN THE
STUDY OF RABBINIC NARRATIVES*

Respondent: Judith Kates (Hebrew College Rabbinical School)

Chair: Elana Stein (Columbia University)

SESSION D5: TEACHING MIDRASH
Shapiro 313

Deena Sigel (University of London),

TEACHING MIDRASH MEANINGFULLY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:

INVESTIGATING CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING

Alvan Kaunfer (Temple Emanu-El),

TEACHING MIDRASH TO CHILDREN: THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Respondent: Joel A. Alter

(JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School)

Chair: Chaim Galfand (Perelman Jewish Day School)

6:30-8:45 pm

PLENARY 3: DINNER SESSION
**HOW GOALS AFFECT PEDAGOGY IN TEACHING
RABBINIC LITERATURE**
Sherman Hall

Dvora Weisberg (HUC-JIR),

TEACHING TALMUD TO FUTURE JEWISH PROFESSIONALS:

CONNECTING GOALS AND TEACHING PRACTICES

Elliot Goldberg (Chicagoland Jewish High School),

FROM VISION TO PEDAGOGY IN THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL SETTING

Charlotte Fonrobert (Stanford University),

WHY THE TALMUD MATTERS: ON TEACHING TALMUD TO THE CURIOUS

Respondent: Jay Harris (Harvard University)

Moderator: Susan P. Fendrick (Brandeis University)

MONDAY MORNING, JANUARY 28, 2008

8:00-9:00 am **CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST**
Sherman Hall

9:00-10:45 am **PLENARY 4:**
THE USES AND ABUSES OF ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP ON
RABBINIC LITERATURE
Sherman Hall

Jenny Labendz (Jewish Theological Seminary),
USING ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN INTRODUCING THE WORLD OF THE RABBIS

Barry Wimpfheimer (Northwestern University),
SAVING THE STUDY OF BAVLI FROM WISSENSCHAFT AND DAF YOMI

Respondent: Aaron Panken (HUC-JIR)

Respondent: Ethan Tucker (Mechon Hadar)

Moderator: Gail Zaiman Dorph (Mandel Foundation)

10:45-11:15 am **BREAK**
Sherman Hall

11:15-12:15 **CONCURRENT SESSIONS E**
Sherman Hall

SESSION E1:
Lurias

Jeffrey Spitzer (Gann Academy),
*DEVELOPING STUDENT AWARENESS OF THE TALMUD AS AN EDITED DOCUMENT:
A PEDAGOGY FOR THE PLURALISTIC SCHOOL*

Respondent: Lisa Schlaff (SAR High School, Riverdale, NY)

Chair: Jethro Berkman (Temple Aliyah)

SESSION E2:
Art Gallery (Shapiro 317)

Jack Bieler (Kemp Mill Synagogue),
*THE REPRESENTATION OF NON-JEWS IN THE TALMUD AND
ITS PEDAGOGIC IMPLICATIONS*

Respondent: Solomon Schimmel (Hebrew College)

Chair: Joshua Moss (American Hebrew Academy)

SESSION E3:

Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Steven Fraade (Yale University),

TEACHING HALAKHA AND AGGADA IN COMBINATION

Respondent: Gail Labovitz (American Jewish University)

Chair: Avraham Walfish (Herzog College)

SESSION E4:

Levine-Ross

Michael Satlow (Brown University),

TEACHING ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY: AN EXPERIMENT IN ENGAGED LEARNING

Respondent: Shaye J.D. Cohen (Harvard University)

Chair: Shawn Fields-Meyer (Milken Community High School)

SESSION E5:

Geller

Dov Lerea (Abraham Joshua Heschel School),

THE PEDAGOGIC CONVERSATION:

*HOW STUDENT, TEXT, AND TEACHER INTERACT TO SHAPE
STUDENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE MISHNAH*

Respondent: Shawn SimonHazani
(Perelman Jewish Day School)

Chair: Neil Scheindlin (Milken Community High School)

SESSION E6:

Shapiro 313

Avital Campbell Hochstein (Shalom Hartman Institute),

TEACHING TALMUD AS A 'CLASSIC'

Respondent: Bradley Solmsen (Brandeis University)

Chair: Robin Nafshi
(Rimon: Collaborative Jewish Learning in MetroWest)

MONDAY AFTERNOON, JANUARY 28, 2008

12:30-2:00 pm LUNCH SESSION: CONCURRENT SESSIONS F

SESSION F1: TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE IN JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS: A ROUNDTABLE

Sherman Hall

Ruth Satinover Fagen (Abraham Joshua Heschel School)

Yair Altshuler (Maimonides School)

Jack Nahmod (Beth Tfiloh Dahan High School)

Moderator: Susan M. Kardos (Combined Jewish Philanthropies)

SESSION F2: TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE IN RABBINICAL SCHOOLS

Lurias

Sarra Lev (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College),

TEACHING RABBINICS AS AN ETHICAL ENDEAVOUR AND TEACHING ETHICS AS A RABBINIC ENDEAVOUR

Jonah Chanan Steinberg (Hebrew College Rabbinical School),

TALMUD STUDY AS A SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOR IN RABBINICAL TRAINING:

DELIGHTS AND DANGERS

Respondent: Marjorie Lehman (Jewish Theological Seminary)

Chair: Ethan Linden (Camp Ramah of New England)

SESSION F3: TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE AT THE MARGINS: A ROUNDTABLE

Levine-Ross

Shari L. Lowin (Stonehill College)

Shai Cherry (American Jewish University)

Ruth Langer (Boston College)

Moderator: Evyatar Marienberg (Jewish Theological Seminary)

SESSION F4: PURSUING RELEVANCE IN THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC LITERATURE

Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Dianne Cohler-Esses (UJA-Federation of NY),
*WHEN TORAH LISHMA DOESN'T WORK IN JEWISH ADULT EDUCATION:
THE USES AND ABUSES OF RABBINIC LITERATURE*

Stephen Hazan Arnoff (14th Street Y of The Educational Alliance),
*RABBIS, RABBLE ROUSERS, AND RELEVANCE:
WHERE DO MIDRASH AND POPULAR CULTURE MEET?*

Respondent: Vivie Mayer (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College)

Chair: Joel A. Alter (JCDS)

2:15-3:15 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS G

SESSION G1:

Levine-Ross

Jane Kanarek (Hebrew College Rabbinical School),
THE PEDAGOGY OF SLOWING DOWN: TEACHING TALMUD IN A SUMMER KOLLEL

Respondent: Rahel Berkovits
(Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies)

Chair: Ethan Tucker (Mechon Hadar)

SESSION G2:

Multipurpose Room (Shapiro 236)

Reuven Kimelman (Brandeis University),
TEACHING THE 'AMIDAH

Respondent: Dov Lerea (Abraham Joshua Heschel School)

Chair: Michael Satlow (Brown University)

SESSION G3:

Lurias

Charlotte Abramson (Jewish Theological Seminary),
DEVELOPING STANDARDS FOR TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE IN DAY SCHOOLS

(Instead of a presentation followed by a response and then discussion, this session will provide opportunities for interaction. There will be no respondent for this session.)

Chair: Solomon Schimmel (Hebrew College)

SESSION G4:

Geller

David Starr (Hebrew College),
*MAKING THE STRANGE FAMILIAR, THE FAMILIAR STRANGE:
TEACHING RABBINICS TO ADULTS IN ME'AH*

Respondent: Michael Balinsky
(Florence Melton Adult Mini-School)

Chair: Alieza Salzberg (Matan/Bar Ilan University)

SESSION G5:

Shapiro 313

Aaron Panken (HUC-JIR),
*RABBIS STUDYING RABBINIC TEXTS ABOUT RABBIS:
AN EXPLORATION OF TEXT, CONTEXT AND SUBTEXT*

*(Instead of a presentation followed by a response and then discussion,
this session will provide opportunities for interaction. There will be no
respondent for this session.)*

Chair: Michael Gillis (Hebrew University)

3:30-4:30 pm

PLENARY 5: CONFERENCE CONCLUSION

Sherman Hall

Lee S. Shulman
(Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching),
CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE SCHOLARSHIP OF TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE

ABSTRACTS

PLENARY SESSION 1: OPENING SESSION

Sherman Hall

Sunday, January 27, 2008

9:00-9:45 am

Jon A. Levisohn, chair of the conference, and Sharon Feiman-Nemser, director of the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education, will welcome participants and frame the agenda of the conference.

SESSION A1: TEACHING HALAKHA

Lurias

Sunday, January 27, 2008

10:00-11:30 am

TEACHING HALAKHA AND RESPECTING STUDENT AUTONOMY

Rahel Berkovits (Pardes Institute for Jewish Studies)

The halakhic system assumes commandedness and personal obligation, and presents a guide for individual and communal practice and behavior. How can teachers of halakhic texts approach the material—and their students—in a manner that does justice to the texts in question and yet respects student autonomy, particularly in non-academic settings? By closely examining student responses to a halakha course on women and mitzvot at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem, we will reflect on what an educator can learn from this data about the inevitable dilemmas she faces—in balancing intentional teaching towards an understanding of halakhic dynamics that can inform principled personal decision-making, with respecting and even affirming the individual autonomy of the students of a variety of Jewish backgrounds—and how that learning might affect teaching practice.

A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TEACHING THE LAWS OF HOLIDAYS

Nati Helfgot (Yeshivat Chovevei Torah)

The teaching of halakhah plays a central role in most, if not all, Modern Orthodox schools, both in the US and in Israel. Anecdotal evidence, conversations with educators, and the minimal published literature on the pedagogy of this subject area point to some of the dilemmas facing educators. This presentation will outline some of the inherent structural, curricular, pedagogic, and conceptual challenges, and present a model for the teaching of *hilkhot moadim* (the laws of holiday observance) that has been used in a number of educational settings, as well as a discussion of the rationale for this approach as a response to those challenges.

SESSION A2: TEACHING MISHNAH
Sunday, January 27, 2008
10:00-11:30 am

Geller

*ENACTING THE MISHNAH:
TEACHING SKILLS AND ETHICS IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL CLASSROOM*
Claudia Marbach (JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School)

Why would middle-school students want to learn Mishnah? Why would teachers want to teach it? In this paper, the presenter will present and analyze her method of teaching Torah She-ba'al Peh in a pluralistic middle school, based on topics that emphasize ethics and experiential learning. Through analyzing records of teaching practice, she will assess how effective this method is in achieving her three goals—that is, giving the students (a) a grounding in ethical behavior based on Jewish practice (b) the basic skills to continue the study of Mishnah and later Gemara (c) a sense of Judaism as a complex system that is the basis of our legal system today, and draw some conclusions related to the general teaching of rabbinics to this age group.

THE MORAL MISHNAH
Judd Levingston (Perelman Jewish Day School)

When our students study Mishnah in our classrooms, how can we help them to uncover layers of moral discourse? This session will explore ways in which the study of Mishnah from different tractates can stimulate sophisticated moral thinking about ethical behavior, about the meaning and possibilities in human existence, about mystery in life, and about human dignity and existential concerns. Although Mishnah Avot includes numerous passages of moral instruction, the bias in this session favors passages of Mishnah that are grounded in ritual life, agricultural life, business transactions, legal issues and human relations.

SESSION A3: TEACHING RABBIS
Sunday, January 27, 2008
10:00-11:30 am

Levine-Ross

*RABBINIC JUDAISM FOR RABBINIC JEWS:
TEACHING ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY TO RABBINICAL STUDENTS*
Yehuda Kurtzer (Harvard University)

The difference between the academic history of the rabbinic period and the rabbis' own version of their history is well attested, and informs curricular choices in Jewish educational environments and the university classroom alike. The context of a class on the history of the rabbinic period in a rabbinical school, however, brings some of these differences to the fore. How are rabbinical students to both master an academic understanding of Jewish history, and also assimilate themselves to the chain of rabbinic Judaism that views its own history so differently? In this session, the presenter will discuss the unique pedagogical issues raised by teaching the history of the rabbinic period, using his own design and teaching of a course in a rabbinical school as the primary case study.

*SOME THINGS RABBIS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT
MISHNAH AND TOSEFTA, AND HOW THEY MIGHT LEARN THEM:
A REPORT FROM THE FIELD*
Aryeh Cohen (American Jewish University)

This presentation will describe the presenter's experience teaching the Introduction to Mishnah and Tosefta course at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies. He will describe and analyze the varied goals of the course, the tricky nature of combining skill and content goals, and the ways in which these goals have and have not been met, and will end with a note about "havrutolatry" in theory and practice.

**SESSION A4:
TEACHING A BEIT MIDRASH
Sunday, January 27, 2008
10:00-11:30 am**

**Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)**

*CO-CONSTRUCTING MEANING:
HEVRUTA IN THE DELET BEIT MIDRASH
Orit Kent (Brandeis University)*

What are the central practices in hevruta interactions and how do participants engage in these practices in order to work with each other and the text? Study of the interaction among the three partners in hevruta—the two learners and the text itself—leads to the identification of six central practices. These practices are: listening, articulating, focusing, wondering, supporting, and challenging. It is the very tension that inheres in trying to strike some sort of balance between these practices that make these hevruta interactions so dynamic, so undetermined, so hard, and often, so engaging. In this presentation, participants will learn about this conceptual framework with video illustrations of hevruta interactions and analysis of the data, building upon the presenter's previous research on hevruta learning. This analysis is based on the study of hevruta in a modern beit midrash.

*WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO DESIGN A BEIT MIDRASH?
Elie Holzer (Bar Ilan University)*

The design and development of a beit midrash in which text study and hevruta learning are performed is a complex and multifaceted endeavor which deserves our attention both as educators and researchers. In this session, the presenter will articulate and map out important questions that should be addressed prior to and in the process of developing a beit midrash, and will address address various educational, philosophical and cultural rationales which underlie these questions. He will then discuss how some of these questions have been addressed in the particular context of DeLeT's Beit Midrash for Teachers at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University.

SESSION B1:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
11:45-12:45 am

Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)

*LEARNING TO WEAR MANY HATS:
 INTEGRATING THE INTELLECTUAL, PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL
 IN A RABBINIC SCHOOL CURRICULUM*
 Dov Linzer (Yeshivat Chovevei Torah)

The issue of curricular "integration" is especially prominent in profession education. This session, about the (ongoing) process of curriculum development at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School, will look at how YCT attempts to integrate a traditional Talmud—and halakha-based curriculum with rigorous professional, pastoral, and leadership training program, in the interest of producing integrated rabbis (both pulpit and non-pulpit). What are the necessary practical and intellectual pieces of Modern Orthodox rabbinic education and training? What integrative skills do accomplished rabbis need and demonstrate? What kind(s)—and which risks—of disintegration does the YCT curriculum attempt to avoid, and how? The focus of this session will be not on the individual educational components but on their integration, into a curriculum that trains rabbis how deal with a variety of lifecycle events and issues (e.g. death and dying, infertility, infidelity) that reflect pastoral, spiritual, and halakhic concerns, with attention to what have so far been the challenges of, learnings from, and unexpected outcomes of this integrated approach.

SESSION B2:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
11:45-12:45 am

Shapiro 313

THE INTRODUCTION OF MISHNAH TEACHING IN A REFORM JEWISH DAY SCHOOL
 Ellen Pildis and Dan Brosgol (The Rashi School)

This presentation will examine the experience of introducing a curriculum for the study of rabbinic literature—specifically, Mishnah—for the first time at a Reform Jewish day school. What were the expectations of students, teachers, and families? What were the particular strengths and weaknesses of the students as they grappled with material? How did their previous work in Jewish studies prepare them for the study of rabbinic literature? Based on teaching journals and the responses of the students and families, the presentation will discuss the challenges and successes of this first attempt at bringing the study of Mishnah to students at the school.

SESSION B3:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
11:45-12:45 am

Levine-Ross

THE POWER OF SHINUN IN THE STUDY OF MISHNAH
Pinchas Hayman (Bonayich Educational Services)

In the context of the presenter's work over the last five years, over twelve thousand students of widely variant backgrounds have participated in mishnah-learning utilizing *shinun* (repetition and memorization), in 150 primary schools in Israel and North America, including Community, Reform, Conservative and Orthodox institutions. This work has yielded powerful anecdotal evidence of cognitive capabilities largely ignored in contemporary Western education. This presentation will relate some of the most dramatic findings of this experimentation, and refer to relevant sources in rabbinic and scientific literature regarding memory learning. The presenter will also connect the cognitive processes underlying the *shinun* experience to the theory of developmental psychology and "attachment teaching" of Dr. Gordon Neufeld, and suggest why and how *shinun* offers transformative possibilities for modern Jewish educators of all movements.

SESSION B4:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
11:45-12:45 am

Lurias

"HOW COULD THE RABBIS DO THAT?":
DOMESTICATING THE STRANGE IN THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC LITERATURE
David Kraemer (Jewish Theological Seminary)

"How could the Rabbis do that?" How often do those of us teaching rabbinic literature hear this question in one form or another from students? How could they have ignored the simple meaning of Scripture? How could they have insisted that the Mishnah means that? How could they have done...a hundred things that those of us familiar with rabbinic literature take for granted. This interactive session, based upon questions from students gleaned over the course of the last four months, will make the case that it is important for the teacher to recognize and "name" the strangeness of rabbinic method for our students, thereby opening the road to genuine cultural translation.

SESSION B5:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
11:45-12:45 am

Geller

TRADITION AND INNOVATION IN RABBINIC LITERATURE:
THE OR HA-HAYYIM ON PARSHANUT HA-MIKRA (BIBLICAL EXEGESIS)
Moshe Sokolow (Yeshiva University)

The pedagogy of *parshanut ha-mikra* must inevitably confront the question of why interpret scripture, and what the relationship ought to be between scriptural exegesis and the larger creative project of rabbinic literature. This session will consider these questions through an exploration of the view of Rabbi Hayyim Ibn Attar (1696-1743), known as the *Or ha-Hayyim* [ha-Kadosh]. In the Introduction to the *Or ha-Hayyim*, as well as in select portions of the commentary (for example, on *Va-Yikra* 13:37), he endeavors to resolve the dilemma of how to maintain the authority of the traditional meaning of the Torah text, on the one hand, while not discouraging or disparaging innovative, individual interpretation [hiddush], on the other. In so doing, he summons "the Jewish people who labor in Torah" to a great hermeneutic enterprise: to find the source in the Written Law for the normative conclusions of the Oral law. In other words, he provides a pedagogical mandate for Jewish Torah study that encourages us to treat Biblical exegesis as an extension of rabbinic literature and to confer upon both the "simultaneity of revelation" (to use Gershom Scholem's phrase) enjoyed by the Written and Oral Laws. In clarifying the *Or ha-Hayyim's* intentions, this presentation will place his remarks in the context of the attempt to uncover the nature of the authority of rabbinic literature to interpret Scripture and the criteria by which its interpretations are validated.

PLENARY SESSION 2:
Sunday, January 27, 2008
1:00-2:30 pm

Sherman Hall

THE TALMUDIC PAGE AND THE HISTORY OF THE STUDY OF TALMUD
David Stern (University of Pennsylvania)

This presentation will trace the history of the Talmud as a physical object, focusing specifically on the *daf ha-gemara* as printed in the Romm Vilna edition. Where did this page's layout come from? How did it become the canonical Talmudic page? And how did it influence and help shape the study of Talmud? To answer the latter question, I will analyze Nathan Habavli's famous description of a study session in the Geonic yeshiva, and Eliyahu Capsali's description of the yeshiva of R. Judah Mintz in *Seder Eliyahu Zuta* (1523).

ORIENTATIONS TO THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC LITERATURE
Jon A. Levisohn (Brandeis University)

Rabbinic literature is not a specific discipline or methodology but a set of texts, and not even a sharply defined set of texts but a loosely and variably defined one. The teaching of these texts occurs in various places, for various purposes, with various assumptions. So what can be said about the field of teaching rabbinic literature as a whole? Following Holtz (in *Textual Knowledge*, 2003) and Grossman (in *The Making of a Teacher*, 1991), this presentation will introduce the idea of "orientations" to the teaching of rabbinic literature, and will propose a set of ten specific orientations that encompass the field. The presentation will thus serve as a prologue to Concurrent Session C, in which individual papers will explore examples of the nuances and possibilities of five in these orientations.

SESSION C1: THE CONTEXTUAL ORIENTATION
Sunday, January 27, 2008
2:45-3:45 pm

Lurias

ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF TALMUDIC LITERATURE
Yaron Eliav (University of Michigan)

This paper will introduce the utility of archaeology for the study of talmudic literature. It will illustrate how the physical realm may contribute to the understanding of (or getting as close as possible to) the original meaning of rabbinic texts. It will then discuss the challenges confronting teachers who wish to integrate this dimension into their teaching of rabbinic material—what happens to the questions we ask and to the goals we set for our students, and what kind of tools do we use—and will offer various ways of overcoming those challenges.

**SESSION C2:
THE LITERARY ORIENTATION**
Sunday, January 27, 2008
2:45-3:45 pm

**Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)**

*A LITERARY ORIENTATION TO TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE:
AN INQUIRY INTO ITS USE WITH ORTHODOX STUDENTS*
Avraham Walfish (Herzog College)

This paper will explore a teaching orientation to talmudic texts, primarily Mishnah and Talmud, that focuses on their literary qualities as sophisticated, well-constructed compositions. Based on the experiences of the presenter and other teachers, we will discuss the kinds of classroom dynamic that a literary orientation may foster. We will examine ways in which verbal cues embedded in the text may be deployed by the instructor to promote skills development, while serving as a point of departure for values-based analysis and discussion. We will discuss how literary orientation, which draws on academic methodologies without undermining the cohesiveness of the text, may serve as an ideologically non-threatening mode of integrating rabbinic and academic scholarship, and how adopting a literary orientation may help foster a classroom dynamic based on joint exploration by teacher and student, rather than frontal instruction.

**SESSION C3:
THE TORAH/INSTRUCTION ORIENTATION**
Sunday, January 27, 2008
2:45-3:45 pm

Levine-Ross

*USING RABBINIC TEXTS AS PEDAGOGIC TRIGGERS:
FROM PEDAGOGY TO CONTENT KNOWLEDGE AND BACK AGAIN*
Jeffrey Schein (Siegel College)

This session compares and contrasts the teaching styles and grounding assumptions about teaching Jewish texts of two Siegal College professors. Each professor utilizes his own "canon" of rabbinical texts that trigger dialogue about Jewish learning in a course on philosophies of Jewish education. One begins with pedagogy in mind and uses Talmudic texts as a means to that end. The other begins with Talmud and utilizes the fact that the students are educators as a means to more effective learning of Talmud. This presentation will examine the ways that each instructor's pedagogic content knowledge shapes their different pedagogic approaches.

**SESSION C4:
THE CULTURAL STUDIES ORIENTATION
Sunday, January 27, 2008
2:45-3:45 pm**

Shapiro 313

*HELPING STUDENTS GET THEIR FEET IN THE DOOR:
GEERTZ' "THICK DESCRIPTION" AND THE USE OF ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN
THE TEACHING OF RABBINIC TEXTS*
Gidon Rothstein (HAFTR)

Academic scholarship can serve the endeavor of teaching rabbinic texts by providing selections of texts that address questions of interest to students. Using a variety of examples, the presenter will argue that what we teach is less important than finding what students are willing to learn, and that Jewish students of almost all types are naturally interested in learning about the world of the Rabbis, for reasons that range from the religious to antiquarian curiosity in their distant forebears. The presenter will discuss ways that academic articles and works of fiction can provide comfortable points of entry into what otherwise might seem a completely foreign culture, strengthening students' anthropologist-like immersion in that culture.

**Session C5: THE HALAKHIC/LEGAL ORIENTATION
Sunday, January 27, 2008
2:45-3:45 pm**

Geller

TEACHING TALMUDIC HERMENEUTICS USING A SEMIOTIC MODEL OF LAW
Daniel Reifman (Midreshet Lindenbaum)

One of the greatest challenges for students of Talmud or halakha is acclimating to a system of logic that seems utterly foreign to their own. This paper proposes that, and demonstrates how, teachers can help students overcome this difficulty by approaching Talmud through the lens of legal theory, and outlines a semiotic model of legal theory, analyzing the way legal texts generate meaning by comparing law to other sign systems such as language. Through investigating and recounting his own experiences teaching halakha to advanced students of Jewish text in two settings, the presenter illustrates and analyzes how pedagogic use of the central tenet of semiotics—that the relationship between text and meaning is necessarily contextual—can better help students understand the nature of Talmudic hermeneutics and of the halakhic process as a whole.

Session D1:TEACHING TALMUD
Sunday, January 27, 2008
5:00-6:30 pm

Lurias

*HOW SHOULD ETHICALLY CHALLENGING TEXTS BE TAUGHT?
REFLECTIONS ON STUDENT REACTIONS TO ACADEMIC
AND YESHIVA-STYLE PRESENTATIONS*
Aryeh Klapper (Gann Academy)

Are troubling traditional texts best taught through apologetics and/or reinterpretation, leaving them as is, or reconstructing alternative positions? How do students react to having their moral instincts presented as minority voices in Jewish tradition? We will explore these questions by analyzing written and oral student reactions to multiple analyses of the rabbinic discussions of the Mishnaic rule that Gentiles are liable when their ox gores an ox belonging to a Jew, but Jews are not liable when their ox gores an ox belonging to a Gentile.

*BRISK, JACOB NEUSNER, AND THE STAM:
SIGNIFICANT METHODOLOGIES FOR MEANINGFUL TALMUD TEACHING AND STUDY*
Michael Chernick (HUC-JIR)

One of the major challenges in the teaching of rabbinic literature—one noted by several of the presenters at this conference—is how to make a connection between that literature and the student. In the case of the Talmud, the major sources of potential disconnect between the learner and the text are (1) the differing concerns and culture of the contemporary student compared to the concerns and culture of the Rabbis and (2) the differing culturally determined modes of discourse used to discuss those concerns. In this session, the presenter will argue that three modern approaches to the Talmud—the "Brisker derekh," the historical-critical method, and Jacob Neusner's approach to rabbinic literature—provide complementary frameworks for the construction of bridges between students/learners and the Talmud, and will then explore the pedagogic possibilities of combining them within one course.

**SESSION D2:
PREPARING COMPELLING LEARNING SESSIONS
Sunday, January 27, 2008
5:00-6:30 pm**

Geller

THE PEDAGOGY OF SERENDIPITY:

PRESENTING THE WEEKLY PARASHA THROUGH THE EYES OF RABBINIC TEXTS

Carl Perkins (Temple Aliyah)

Determining the content and form of an interactive dvar torah/study session in the congregational setting requires not only a thorough understanding of the themes of the weekly or holiday reading and how they have been explored in rabbinic literature, but also an awareness of and a sensitivity toward the calendar (Jewish and secular), current events (within the community as well as nationally and internationally), and what is happening in the darshan's own heart and mind. The context (a service at which "newcomers" as well as "regulars" of all ages are present, together with families celebrating key lifecycle transitions) presents its own unique pedagogic challenges. This presentation will attempt to unpack the process by which one rabbi comes to determine what he is going to say, which texts he will use, and how he will use them. He will explore and analyze the initial flashes of insight in which he comes to "know" just what he plans to do and which texts (and what approach to them) will "work" (and what is meant by "working"), and will explore how this relates to what happens during the actual study sessions that take place.

MEDIATING THE TEXT AND FOSTERING ORGANIC DISCUSSION:

THE CHALLENGE OF CREATING RABBINIC-TEXT STUDY GUIDES

Elyse Winick (KOACH, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism)

For the past five years, KOACH has crafted an annual KOACH Shabbat, sending study materials and rabbinical students to some forty college campuses throughout North America. Each year the program has a defined theme and study guides designed for both rabbinical students and peer-led study. The texts are aligned to lead to particular conclusions; the study guides are developed to support those ends. How much direction is created by the text itself and how much lies in the hand of the individual teacher? To what extent can the distant hand of a curriculum developer control outcomes?

**SESSION D3:
STUDYING TEACHERS OF RABBINIC LITERATURE
Sunday, January 27, 2008
5:00-6:30 pm**

Levine-Ross

*WHAT DO TEACHERS NEED TO KNOW TO TEACH TALMUD?
AN INQUIRY INTO TEACHER KNOWLEDGE*
Karen G. Reiss Medwed (University of Pennsylvania)

How and why does content knowledge matter in teaching Talmud? What kinds and forms of content knowledge do teachers of Talmud and rabbinics need? What kinds of subject-specific pedagogy does this content knowledge suggest? And how should we address teachers' knowledge needs in our teacher preparation and teacher development programs? This presentation will explore these questions using data from in-depth interviews of teachers of rabbinic literature in liberal day schools at the high school level.

*HOW DO TEACHERS' BACKGROUNDS IN STUDYING TALMUD
AFFECT THEIR TEACHING OF TALMUD?
THREE PORTRAITS*
Michael Gillis (Hebrew University)

The paper will present portraits of three teachers of Talmud in a community high school. The particular focus is on the ways their own learning backgrounds affect their teaching and, in turn, on how the experience of teaching in this particular context comes to modify how the Talmud is presented in the classroom. As the three teachers are quite distinct in their background and experience, this research shows the plurality of possibilities in the development of pedagogical content knowledge in the teaching of Talmud.

**SESSION D4:
TEACHING ADULTS
Sunday, January 27, 2008
5:00-6:30 pm**

**Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)**

*LEARNING FROM ADULT LEARNERS:
WHAT STUDENTS CAN TEACH US ABOUT HOW TO TEACH RABBINICS*
Marcie Lenk (Harvard University)

What can adult students teach us, the instructors, about what they need for a successful learning experience? What particular challenges come with learning—and thus with teaching—rabbinic history and literature? Without exams or papers, feedback from students is haphazard or takes the form of class evaluations, which does not give the instructor a clear sense of what students have actually learned, or what remains difficult, confusing or frustrating to them. This session looks at a one-semester Me'ah course, examining student feedback derived from email exchanges between student and instructor, solicited throughout the semester, as well as data from the instructor's teaching journal, revealing the particular needs and difficulties of this group of adult learners of rabbinics and suggesting some implications for pedagogy.

*HOW SCHOLARSHIP CAN CONTRIBUTE TO PEDAGOGY:
THE EXAMPLE OF THE SHIFTING SCHOLARLY PARADIGMS IN THE STUDY OF
RABBINIC NARRATIVES*
Jeffrey Rubenstein (New York University)

The study of rabbinic sage-stories has undergone a Kuhnian paradigm shift during the last thirty years, from "historical" approaches that seek to reconstruct the lives and deeds of the rabbis to literary approaches that attempt to discern the lessons that the storytellers communicate. This session will explore the important pedagogical implications this methodological shift has for adult education and other popular educational settings.

SESSION D5: TEACHING MIDRASH
Sunday, January 27, 2008
5:00-6:30 pm

Shapiro 313

*TEACHING MIDRASH MEANINGFULLY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL:
INVESTIGATING CHILDREN'S UNDERSTANDING*
Deena Sigel (University of London)

This session is an outgrowth of the presenter's empirical research in the area of midrash pedagogy, investigating children's understandings of midrash. The study included four fifth-grade classes—two in Israel, one in England and one in the United States. We will cover some of the problems encountered when there is a lack of pedagogy of midrash as a discrete subject. We will also follow one student as she participates in a midrash mini-course, and use her reflections to illustrate the religious and pedagogical issues that are raised when midrash is presented to young students, as well as the depth of thinking of which children are capable when they engage with religious texts. The session will also propose a model for teaching midrash meaningfully in elementary school.

*TEACHING MIDRASH TO CHILDREN:
THEORY INTO PRACTICE*
Alvan Kaunfer (Temple Emanu-El)

This presentation will focus on theoretical and practical considerations in teaching midrash to children. After exploring a rationale for such teaching, we will examine how children's thinking relates to midrashic style and methods, and will look at an example lesson which focuses on students both creating midrash and analyzing a traditional midrash.

PLENARY SESSION 3: DINNER SESSION
HOW GOALS AFFECT PEDAGOGY IN
Sunday, January 27, 2008
6:30-8:30 pm

Sherman Hall

*TEACHING TALMUD TO FUTURE JEWISH PROFESSIONALS:
CONNECTING GOALS AND TEACHING PRACTICES*
Dvora Weisberg (HUC-JIR)

Teaching Talmud to rabbinic and education students requires identifying goals related to their future roles as educators and teachers themselves. The presenter will discuss her own process of identifying particular objectives for this cohort and how that identification shapes her decisions regarding selection of material, teaching practices, and assessment.

FROM VISION TO PEDAGOGY IN THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL SETTING
Elliot Goldberg (Chicagoland Jewish High School)

While the teaching of Talmud is a standard component in the curriculum of the contemporary college preparatory Jewish high school, no standard exists that defines what that curriculum should contain and how it should be taught. In other disciplines, there are high levels of consensus. The uniformity of Algebra II/Trigonometry courses does not exist for 11th grade Talmud classes. Assuming that having a clear vision about why Talmud is included in the curriculum of a school is essential to developing a coherent curriculum, this presentation will focus upon how the content of that vision has direct implications for how Talmud should be taught in that school, using concrete examples from the Chicagoland Jewish High School. An underlying premise of this discussion is that there are multiple plausibility structures to support the inclusion of Talmud in a curriculum, and each merits its own pedagogy.

*WHY THE TALMUD MATTERS:
ON TEACHING TALMUD TO THE CURIOUS*
Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert (Stanford University)

One of the great challenges of teaching Talmud in a university context is that one teaches students who do not necessarily accept the talmudic premise of halakhic commitment, entailing a constant effort to translate its culture of halakhically-involved debate. As with any project of translation, this involves an ongoing negotiation between remaining faithful to the cultural universe of the Talmud while conveying its vision through other texts of various disciplines (philosophy, literature, cultural anthropology, and religion). Differently put, the pedagogic difficulty lies in conveying the stakes of the talmudic debates for the ancient rabbis without getting lost in what can appear as excessive devotion to detail, yet without erasing the details. Examination of one example of an extended discussion from Masekhet Eruvin will serve to illustrate the presenter's reflections on what is entailed in a "cultural translation" of the halakhic debates of the Talmud, before extrapolating to the general importance of this didactic approach.

PLENARY SESSION 4:
THE USES AND ABUSES OF ACADEMIC
SCHOLARSHIP ON RABBINIC LITERATURE
Monday, January 28, 2008
9:00-10:45 am

Sherman Hall

USING ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIP IN INTRODUCING THE WORLD OF THE RABBIS
 Jenny Labendz (Jewish Theological Seminary)

Whereas a traditional introductory Talmud course focuses on text reading skills and on the mastery of a particular slice of the Babylonian Talmud, the presenter's course, "Introduction to the World of the Rabbis," focuses instead on cultural anthropology and on encounters with a range of rabbinic texts and ideas. Using examples from this course, this session will address how and to what effect the goals of scholarship and the methods and manner of reading in academia can contribute to introductory Talmud classes.

SAVING THE STUDY OF THE BAVLI FROM WISSENSCHAFT AND DAF YOMI
 Barry Wimpfheimer (Northwestern University)

The popular phenomenon of Daf Yomi and the academic "Wissenschaft" study of Talmud are polar opposites along the continuum of the teaching and learning of rabbinic literature. This presentation will explore the ways in which both of these rubrics lose sight of the features of the Bavli that have made it the central vocational Jewish study text for the last millennium. It will employ the academic theoretical language of discourse analysis to discuss the Bavli as a foundational text that has both triggered and sustained a distinctive and nuanced generations-long intellectual conversation.

SESSION E1:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm

Lurias

DEVELOPING STUDENT AWARENESS OF THE TALMUD AS AN EDITED DOCUMENT:
A PEDAGOGY FOR THE PLURALISTIC SCHOOL
 Jeffrey Spitzer (Gann Academy)

Through analysis of student work on the sugyot on excommunication and on human dignity in Bavli Berakhot, chapter 3, we will assess how ninth-grade students learn to make judgments about editorial intention and the meaning of the Talmud. We will explore the ways in which pedagogy that asks students to confront editorial choices in manipulating and recontextualizing source materials, and helps students appreciate the complexity and multivocality of the talmudic text, is especially well suited to the needs of a pluralistic day school.

SESSION E2:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm

Art Gallery
(Shapiro 317)

*THE REPRESENTATION OF NON-JEWS IN THE TALMUD
AND ITS PEDAGOGIC IMPLICATIONS*
Jack Bieler (Kemp Mill Synagogue)

Talmudic discussions reflecting how Jewish law views the property and lives of non-Jews, and interactions between Jews and non-Jews, may be troubling for students and teachers alike. What effect does teaching this material have upon teachers and students? What kinds of questions and conversations ensue? And what conclusions can we draw about how such texts might be approached in the contexts of day schools and adult education programs? This session will explore these questions, drawing upon the presenter's experience teaching certain of these texts in various settings.

SESSION E3:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm

Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)

TEACHING HALAKHA AND AGGADA IN COMBINATION
Steven Fraade (Yale University)

What is the nature of the relationship between law (halakha) and narrative (aggada) in Jewish culture from the Bible to the present? By looking at rabbinic texts (with some biblical backdrops and modern reverberations) that exemplify or problematize the relationship between these two aspects of rabbinic dialectical creativity, we will ask about the implications for the teaching of classical rabbinic texts—including pedagogic challenges, tensions, possibilities, and responsibilities—in a way that is sensitive to their combination rather than isolation.

SESSION E4:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm

Levine-Ross

*TEACHING ANCIENT JEWISH HISTORY:
 AN EXPERIMENT IN ENGAGED LEARNING*
 Michael Satlow (Brown University)

How do undergraduate students learn a historical narrative of Judaism in late antiquity? How do we, as teachers, assess our success at conveying to them not simply a specific history, but a broader set of critical skills that they should be able to apply to new data? In his survey class on early Jewish history in spring, 2007, the presenter conducted an experiment in which the class's primary assignment was to work as a group (and in sub-groups) to build a "wiki" (a collaborative website) on early Jewish history. This experiment had three goals: (1) to seek to discover how students moved from passively learning a narrative of this period of Jewish history to actively applying what they learned; (2) to assessing the effectiveness of incorporating more active learning in such a class; and (3) to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the wiki as an educational tool. The presenter's paper will report on what he learned from this experiment and propose some pedagogic implications for the use of wikis in educational settings as well as how students make sense of historical narrative.

SESSION E5:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm

Geller

*THE PEDAGOGIC CONVERSATION:
 HOW STUDENT, TEXT, AND TEACHER INTERACT TO SHAPE STUDENT
 UNDERSTANDING OF THE MISHNAH*
 Dov Lerea (Abraham Joshua Heschel School)

In addition to the many competencies, sensibilities and skills required of teachers, teaching requires both challenging and following the thinking of one's students. In this session, the presenter will present data from a case-study setting in which he followed the thinking of three students as they attempted to make sense of a Mishnah text. The presentation is dedicated to providing and analyzing a thick description of the interactions between teacher, students and text. The analysis will generate suggestions about the implications of such interactions for the teacher's pedagogic decision-making.

**SESSION E6:
Monday, January 28, 2008
11:15 am-12:15 pm**

Shapiro 313

TEACHING TALMUD AS A "CLASSIC"

Avital Campbell Hochstein (Shalom Hartman Institute)

There are two central goals in the teaching of Talmud: (1) teaching Talmud as one of our central classical texts, i.e., bringing students to consider the Talmud a text containing wisdom that can be insightful regarding their lives, a text which continues to innovate when revisited, a text that relates to the great essential questions of life and to its everyday challenges; and (2) bringing students to a level of literacy with this central text, i.e., bringing them to want and to have the tools to do so. These goals have implications for curriculum and for the practice of teaching. This presentation will discuss these goals and describe learning in a Bet Midrash setting and how it relates to the goals above, with specific reference to the Jewish Studies Bet Midrash at the Shalom Hartman Institute's new Midrasha LeBanot Girls' High School in Jerusalem.

**SESSION F1:
TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE IN
JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS: A ROUNDTABLE
Monday, January 28, 2008
12:30-2:00 pm**

Sherman Hall

Ruth Satinover Fagen (Abraham Joshua Heschel School)
Yair Altshuler (Maimonides School)
Jack Nahmod (Beth Tfiloh Dahan High School)

In this discussion session over lunch, three educational leaders from a diverse set of Jewish day schools will share perspectives based on their experiences at their own institutions. Topics will include the organization of a curriculum in rabbinic literature, the assessment of student learning in this area, and what constitutes good and generative learning experiences for their students. These areas of focus will serve as windows into the larger question of how we might conceive of the goals of teaching rabbinic literature in Jewish day schools.

**SESSION F2:
TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE IN
RABBINICAL SCHOOLS
Monday, January 28, 2008
12:30-2:00 pm**

Lurias

*TEACHING RABBINICS AS AN ETHICAL ENDEAVOR AND TEACHING
ETHICS AS A RABBINIC ENDEAVOR*

Sarra Lev (Reconstructionist Rabbinical College)

This presentation examines the conflicts and balances in teaching rabbinic texts and contemporary ethical principles in the education of rabbis. It examines two challenges: (1) what to do when looking for ethical guidance and wisdom from texts which are sometimes, by the standards in the given context (in this case, the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College), unethical; and (2) how to make ethical leaders of our students through our teaching of these texts. The presenter will examine the responses of several students to these questions, and reflect upon selected instances where these problems have arisen in her teaching.

*TALMUD STUDY AS A SPIRITUAL ENDEAVOR IN RABBINIC TRAINING:
DELIGHTS AND DANGERS*

Jonah Steinberg (Hebrew College Rabbinical School)

Rabbinical students come to the study of classical sources spiritually motivated, seeking practical relevance and personal connection to tradition through Talmudic study. Teachers of future rabbis are answerable not only for intellectual standards but also for the future of Talmudic conversation as a factor in the continuing life of Judaism. In this presentation, I draw upon the experience of introducing rabbinical students to Talmudic study in four rabbinical schools, and upon the responses of students, to reflect upon curricular and pedagogical choices that arise from considering that spiritual development is at stake in the very same classrooms where we cultivate technical and analytical skills.

**SESSION F3:
TEACHING RABBINIC LITERATURE AT THE MARGINS:
A ROUND TABLE
Monday, January 28, 2008
12:30-2:00 pm**

Levine-Ross

Shari Lowin (Stonehill College)
Shai Cherry (American Jewish University)
Ruth Langer (Boston College)

In this discussion session over lunch, three educators with experience teaching non-Jewish religiously-affiliated audiences will explore the particular dynamics of teaching rabbinic literature in these settings. Topics will include the preconceptions that students bring to the study of rabbinic literature, the comparative study of rabbinic literature alongside other literatures, and how these particular environments have influenced the presenters' pedagogy. Most fundamentally, the session will explore the question of what we can learn about teaching rabbinic literature, or perhaps about rabbinic literature itself, from the experience of teaching in these particular settings.

**SESSION F4:
PURSUING RELEVANCE IN THE TEACHING OF
RABBINIC LITERATURE
Monday, January 28, 2008
12:30-2:00 pm**

**Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)**

*WHEN TORAH LISHMA DOESN'T WORK IN JEWISH ADULT EDUCATION:
THE USES AND ABUSES OF RABBINIC LITERATURE*
Dianne Cohler-Esses (UJA-Federation of NY)

Frequently in adult Jewish education settings, the teacher must choose or frame texts as relevant personally to the student, or to the world he/she lives in; otherwise the material simply does not speak to participants nor motivate them to attend classes. How does an instructor simultaneously meet the requirements of adult students for relevance while teaching the texts with academic and historic integrity? This presenter will, through analyzing her own records of practice (text selections as well as recounting classroom moments of success and failure) discuss three significant ways that this dilemma plays out and suggest some implications for teachers of adult Jewish education. She will also explore with participants effective ways of presenting rabbinic material to those with little or no textual background, meeting the challenge of illuminating the rabbinic midrashic enterprise in a way that encourages students to view it as one that has integrity.

*RABBIS, RABBLE ROUSERS, AND RELEVANCE:
HOW MIGHT MIDRASH AND POPULAR CULTURE MEET?*
Stephen Hazan Arnoff (14th Street Y of The Educational Alliance)

How might texts of popular art and culture—exemplified here by the comedy of Lenny Bruce and Sarah Silverman, fiction by Philip Roth, and *The Wizard of Oz*—be engaged as foils, supplements, and even remedies for the challenges of adult Jewish learning of traditional texts? Such juxtapositions of content can offer a compelling platform for encountering the great ideas of the tradition, sharpening the intellectual experience of study, and engaging the dilemmas through which contemporary life turns. This talk explores the pedagogical methods, motivations, and results of combining rabbinic texts and texts of popular culture.

SESSION G1:
Monday, January 28, 2008
2:15-3:15 pm

Levine-Ross

*THE PEDAGOGY OF SLOWING DOWN:
TEACHING TALMUD IN A SUMMER KOLLEL*
Jane Kanarek (Hebrew College Rabbinical School)

In the course of investigating her own teaching in an intermediate level Talmud class at the Northwoods Kollel of Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, the presenter discovered that the idea of "slowing down" recurred in her own language and the language of the students. But what does slowing down mean, in the study of Talmud, and what practices or stances are encompassed by the phrase? In this session, the presenter examines the methods and practices through which she encourages students to slow down—that is, what is her pedagogy of slowing down?—and asks what can be learned from her own teaching, and from her students' experience, about how slowing down contributes to the learning process and even to religious identity formation.

SESSION G2:
Monday, January 28, 2008
2:15-3:15 pm

Multipurpose Room
(Shapiro 236)

TEACHING THE 'AMIDAH
Reuven Kimelman (Brandeis University)

There are three questions around which the teaching of the 'Amidah ought to be organized: what are readers of the liturgical text apprised of, how are they apprised, and why. This what, how, and why correspond in literary criticism to the historiographic function, the aesthetic factor, and the ideological principle. But these are not merely distinct questions or distinct methodologies, among which teachers of the liturgical text can pick and choose. Instead, the argument of this presentation is that historical issues, aesthetic or literary considerations, and ideological factors converge to illuminate its meaning, and thus that each require pedagogic attention when teaching the 'Amidah.

SESSION G3:
Monday, January 28, 2008
2:15-3:15 pm

Lurias

*DEVELOPING STANDARDS FOR TEACHING RABBINIC
LITERATURE IN DAY SCHOOLS*
Charlotte Abramson (Jewish Theological Seminary)

How do we determine the goals for teaching rabbinic literature in the day school? Which skills and kinds of knowledge define student mastery of the discipline? How can schools clarify their goals for the teaching of rabbinic literature? How might rabbinics standards improve the teaching and learning of rabbinics in the day school? In this session, participants will be introduced to the TaNaKH standards in the Standards and Benchmarks Project and the rationale for standards-based curriculum design, as a springboard for discussing the potential for developing standards for the teaching and learning of rabbinic literature. Participants will have an opportunity to unpack what they understand to be the discipline of rabbinic literature, and how their understanding of the discipline can serve as a basis for generating overarching learning outcomes or standards for the teaching and learning of rabbinic literature.

SESSION G4:
Monday, January 28, 2008
2:15-3:15 pm

Geller

*MAKING THE STRANGE FAMILIAR, THE FAMILIAR STRANGE:
TEACHING RABBINICS TO ADULTS IN ME'AH*
David Starr (Hebrew College)

We set multiple goals for rabbinics teaching in Me'ah: cognitive, skill-building, and affective, to name three. How do these interact with one another? And what is the relationship between how we teach—our methods—and the ends we try to achieve? This paper will pursue these questions through an analysis of interviews of Me'ah instructors in which they were asked to reflect on their teaching experiences. In particular, the paper will argue that the idea of making the strange familiar and the familiar strange is a central theme in that reflection.

SESSION G5:
Monday, January 28, 2008
2:15-3:15 pm

Shapiro 313

*RABBIS STUDYING RABBINIC TEXTS ABOUT RABBIS:
AN EXPLORATION OF TEXT, CONTEXT AND SUBTEXT*
Aaron Panken (HUC-JIR)

This session will investigate uses of a passage from the Talmud Yerushalmi that provokes critical questions about the boundaries and definitions of a rabbi's (and other Jewish professionals') roles in Jewish communal life. We will first analyze the various uses professors and students make of rabbinic texts in seminary and professional development settings. Then, through studying this particular passage, this session will pivot around a number of fulcrums: first, studying the text will engender questions about the act of interpretation itself; second, the study will discuss the text's authentic application to contemporary life; third, it will question the particular claim that this text (and texts in general) have on the life of a student; and, finally, it will consider the use of a given text as an historically limited document versus as a document that has the potential to speak to and influence communities beyond its own time.

PLENARY SESSION 5:
CONFERENCE CONCLUSION
Monday, January 28, 2008
3:30-4:30 pm

Sherman Hall

Lee S. Shulman, president of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, will conclude the conference by placing the study of the teaching of rabbinic literature in the context of what has become known as the "scholarship of teaching."

BIOGRAPHIES OF PRESENTERS AND PANELISTS

(listed alphabetically)

Charlotte Abramson serves as the project director for The Jewish Day School Standards and Benchmarks Project, a project of the Melton Research Center for Jewish Education of the Jewish Theological Seminary. The Standards and Benchmarks Project is a professional development program designed to improve the teaching and learning of TaNaKH in community, Reform and Conservative day schools by applying standards as the basis for developing curriculum. Prior to her current work, she served in several capacities in Jewish day school administration and as a teacher of Tanakh and Rabbinics.

Joel A. Alter serves as Rav Beit HaSefer and Assistant Head of School at JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School, where he also teaches rabbinics in the middle school. Trained as a rabbi and Jewish educator at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, he has previously served Washington's Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School and, as a member of the founding team, Baltimore's Shoshana S. Cardin School. He enjoyed several years of participation in the Hartman Institute's TICHON program, where he cultivated his interest in a theological and values-oriented approach toward Jewish texts.

Yair Altshuler is the principal of the Middle and Upper Schools and head of the administrative team at Maimonides School in Brookline, MA. He received an M.A at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Prior to his current position, Rabbi Altshuler was a principal at Ohr Torah Ramot Yeshiva Middle School, and pedagogical instructor at the Lipshitz Academic College for Teacher Training in Jerusalem. His fields of expertise are formal and informal education, teacher education and Talmud teaching.

Sharon Cohen Anisfeld is dean of the Rabbinical School at Hebrew College. She assumed this position 1-1/2 years ago after working for 17 years in a variety of transdenominational Jewish communities and pluralistic Jewish educational contexts. Previously a Hillel rabbi at Tufts, Yale, and Harvard, she is committed to bringing classical Jewish sources to bear on contemporary questions of personal meaning and social justice. Rabbi Cohen Anisfeld has served on the summer faculty of the Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel since 1993, and is the co-editor of two collections of women's writing about Passover, *The Women's Passover Companion* and *The Women's Seder Sourcebook*. She graduated from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1990.

Stephen Hazan Arnoff, Executive Director of the 14th Street Y of The Educational Alliance since October 2007, writes on art, text, religion, culture, and education for academic and popular publications and has taught and lectured widely in Israel, Europe, and North America. He has served as Managing Editor of *Zeek: A Jewish Journal of Thought and Culture*, was a Jerusalem Fellow at the Mandel Leadership Institute, and is currently a doctoral candidate at the Jewish Theological Seminary in midrash.

Michael Balinsky is Director of Faculty Development for the Florence Melton Adult Mini-School. He previously served as the director of Hillel at Northwestern University. He has taught in many adult education settings. Rabbi Balinsky is a graduate of Yeshiva University, where he also received rabbinic ordination.

Mara Benjamin is Visiting Lecturer in Religious Studies and Judaic Studies at Yale University, and Visiting Lecturer in Judaic and Near Eastern Studies at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. In addition, she is the first full-year scholar-in-residence at the Society for the Advancement of Judaism in New York City. She is an alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship and holds a doctorate in modern Jewish thought from Stanford University. Her book on Franz Rosenzweig and scripture is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

Jethro Berkman is a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, where he was twice awarded the Ann Pinkenson Prize for excellence in the study of rabbinic literature and civilization. While at RRC, he served as the Jewish advisor at Swarthmore College. He is currently the Director of Community Education at Temple Aliyah in Needham, MA.

Rahel Berkovits teaches Mishnah, Talmud, and halakha at the Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem. She has spent many years studying Talmud in both traditional and academic frameworks at such institutions as Midreshet Lindenbaum, the Shalom Hartman Institute, and Hebrew University. She has taught Torah she'b'al peh to middle school students in the Israeli public school system, and Jewish Studies in a day school, a supplementary school, and to adults in the US. Ms. Berkovits lectures widely on halakha and women's ritual practice in both the US and Israel, and has published articles on the topic, most recently on the CD *Jewish Women: A Comprehensive Historical Encyclopedia*. She is the editor of *Ta Shma*, the Jewish Orthodox Feminist Alliance's upcoming *Halakhic Study Guide Series*.

Beth Berkowitz is Assistant Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. She is the author of *Execution and Invention: Death Penalty Discourse in Early Rabbinic and Christian Cultures* (Oxford University Press, 2006). For the academic year 2007-2008, she is a fellow at the Center for Advanced Judaic Studies at the University of Pennsylvania, where she is working on her current research project, "*And in Their Laws You Shall Not Go*": *Anxieties of Identity in Bible Reading*, which explores how Jews and Christians have constructed religious identities through their readings of *Leviticus 18:3*.

Jack Bieler is Rabbi of the Kemp Mill Synagogue in Silver Spring, MD and on the Judaic studies faculty of the Melvin J. Berman Hebrew Academy in Rockville, MD. He has been an administrator and Talmud teacher in day schools for over 30 years. He has written extensively on the philosophy of Modern Orthodox day school education.

Scott Bolton is Head of School at Reuben Gittelman Hebrew Day School in New City, New York. He has previously served as Head of School and in various administrative capacities at day schools, as well as instructor in Bible and Halakhah. He runs a Talmud and Visual Arts Commentaries project called Gemoranut, and he is launching Beit Midrash Tikkun, where text study and social action will be integrated. He was ordained at the Ziegler School of Rabbinical Studies.

Marc Brettler is the Dora Golding Professor of Biblical Studies and former chair of the Department of Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University. He has also taught in various adult Jewish education settings, including the Wexner Heritage Program, the innovative Me'ah program in Boston, and has served as scholar-in-residence for the Foundation for Jewish Studies in Washington DC. A graduate of Brandeis University, he has published and lectured widely on metaphor and the Bible, the nature of biblical historical texts, and gender issues and the Bible. Dr. Brettler is co-editor of the *Jewish Study Bible*, published by Oxford University Press in 2004 and recipient of a National Jewish Book Award. The author and editor of numerous books, his most recent book is *How to Read the Bible* (Jewish Publication Society). He recently returned from a sabbatical teaching and researching in Israel, England, China, and Japan.

Dan Brosgol is the Jewish Programs Coordinator at The Rashi School in Newton, Massachusetts. He teaches eighth-grade Jewish Studies and the middle school Mishnah elective, leads tefilah for grades 1-8, and coordinates all school-to-school Israel programming between Rashi and the Leo Baeck School in Haifa. He was previously the Associate Director of the Prozdor Hebrew High School at Hebrew College, where he still teaches three days a week. He has over a decade of experience in a variety of Jewish educational settings, including camp, day school, religious school, Israel trips, and other Jewish travel experiences. He is a graduate of Brandeis University, and received his Master's Degree in Jewish Education and Certificate in Day School Education from Hebrew College.

Michael Chernick is the Deutsch Family Professor of Jewish Jurisprudence and Social Justice at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion. He received his ordination and PhD in Talmud from Yeshiva University. He teaches in academic and adult Jewish educational programs, and he has published books and articles on rabbinic literature directed to the constituencies who study and teach in those settings. He founded the summer Judaic studies program at Kibbutz Yahel, the first Reform kibbutz, and organized and led several UAHC (now URJ) study kallot in Israel.

Shai Cherry has a PhD in Jewish Thought from Brandeis University, where his early research focused on creation and evolution in Jewish thought. He has served as Mellon Assistant Professor of Jewish Thought at Vanderbilt University, and taught rabbinics and modern Jewish thought at Hebrew College in Boston. He is currently an adjunct professor at UCLA and at American Jewish University's Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, where he is also studying for rabbinic ordination. His writings have appeared in numerous publications including *Aleph: Historical Studies in Science and Judaism and Tiferet: A Journal of Spiritual Literature*. His works include "Crisis Management via Biblical Interpretation: Fundamentalism, Modern Orthodoxy and Genesis" (in *Jewish Tradition and the Challenge of Evolution*, ed. Geoffrey Cantor and Marc Swetlitz, University of Chicago Press, 2006). His first book is *Torah Through Time: Understanding Bible Commentary from the Rabbinic Period to Modern Time* (Jewish Publication Society, 2007).

Arveh Cohen is Associate Professor of Rabbinic Literature at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies of the American Jewish University (formerly the University of Judaism). He wrote the Rabbinics curriculum for Ziegler and has, at one time or another, taught most of the courses therein. He is the author of *Rereading Talmud: Gender, Law and the Poetics of Sugyot*, and *Beginning/Again: Toward a Hermeneutic of Jewish Texts*. He is currently working on a commentary to Tractate Shabbat for *The Feminist Commentary to the Talmud*, to be edited by Tal Ilan and underwritten by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (German Research Foundation), and *Justice in the City: Rabbinic Representations of the Just City*.

Rhonda Cohen serves as the K-12 Director of Curriculum and Instruction for Hastings Public Schools located in Westchester County, New York. She has also worked in Jewish education for 17 years, teaching Hebrew and religious studies to adults and children, and serving as an education consultant for curriculum development and teacher training. Her research interests center on the use of records of practice as a medium for teacher learning. Dr. Cohen holds master's degrees in Educational Administration and Policy from the University of Michigan and in Elementary Education from Lesley College, and completed her Ph.D. in Teaching and Teacher Education at the University of Michigan.

Shaye J. D. Cohen is the Director of the Center for Jewish Studies and Littauer Professor of Hebrew Language and Literature at Harvard University. He is the author of *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (1999), *Why Aren't Jewish Women Circumcised?* (2005), and many other studies of ancient and medieval Judaism. He is currently working on a new translation of the Mishnah as well as a history of Mishnaic law.

Dianne Cohler-Esses is scholar-in-residence at UJA-Federation in New York, teaching courses on Biblical narrative and law, Talmud, Jewish ethics, and mysticism to diverse groups of Federation lay leaders and staff, as well as those of UJA beneficiary agencies. She received rabbinic ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary in 1995 and is the first woman from the Syrian Jewish community to become a rabbi, as well as the first—and currently the only—person from that community to become a non-Orthodox rabbi. After ordination, she served as a fellow at CLAL: The National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership where she studied with Rabbi Yitz Greenberg. She subsequently joined the CLAL faculty, teaching in pluralist settings, while pursuing advanced study of midrash at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Before coming to UJA-Federation, Rabbi Cohler-Esses taught and consulted widely in the Jewish world for such organizations as Ma'ayan, the Jewish Life Network, and The Curriculum Initiative, and has served on the faculties of the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning, the Hebrew Union College Kollel, and the Edgar M. Bronfman Youth Fellowships in Israel (BYFI). She writes regularly about Torah and Jewish ethnicity for anthologies and scholarly journals, and for the *New York Jewish Week*.

Reuven Cohn teaches rabbinic texts for Hebrew College Online, the Meah adult education program, and Ma'ayan, all in the Boston area. He also teaches Jewish history at the Maimonides School. He received rabbinic ordination and an MS in Jewish Education from Yeshiva University, an MA in Jewish Studies from Harvard University, and a JD from Yale Law School.

Jacob Cytryn is a doctoral candidate in Jewish Studies and Education at Brandeis University, where he serves as a Research Assistant at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education. A Wexner Graduate Fellow, Jacob has a B.A. in Classical Studies from the University of Pennsylvania and an M.A. in Talmud and Rabbinics from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He also serves as the year-round Program Director for Camp Ramah in Wisconsin.

Gail Zaiman Dorph is the director of the Mandel Foundation's Teacher Educator Institute (MTEI), an innovative two-year professional development program for senior Jewish educators, and a consultant to communal organizations, universities, and schools on the creation of professional programs for principals and teachers. She is an associate editor of the *Journal of Jewish Education*, and has published several works in the field of teacher education. Her most recent article, co-authored with Susan Stodolsky and Wendy Rosov, describing the impact of sustained professional development programs in two Jewish congregational schools, will appear this spring in the *Journal of Religious Education*. Before working at the Mandel Foundation, Dr. Dorph directed the Fingerhut School of Education at the American Jewish University (formerly the University of Judaism), and has also taught at the DeLeT program at Brandeis University and at Hebrew Union College.

Yaron Eliav is the Jean and Samuel Frankel Associate Professor of Rabbinic Literature and Jewish History of Late Antiquity at the University of Michigan. He draws on talmudic, early Christian, and classic literatures, as well as on archaeology, in order to study the multi-faceted cultural environment of Roman Palestine with emphasis on the encounter between Jews and Greco-Roman culture. His latest book is *God's Mountain: The Temple Mount in Time, Space, and Memory* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

Ruth Satinover Fagen is Department Chair of Limudei Qodesh and Faculty Educator at the Abraham Joshua Heschel High School in New York. Prior to coming to Heschel, she was the founding director of HaSha'ar, a fellowship program that prepares young adults to teach in Jewish day schools.

Sharon Feiman-Nemser is the Mandel Professor of Jewish Education at Brandeis University and director of the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education. She has written extensively about mentoring, new teacher induction, teacher learning and the curriculum and pedagogy of teacher education. A scholar and practitioner of teacher education, she has co-founded and directed innovative programs that serve as sites for research on learning to teach at the University of Chicago, at Michigan State University, and now at Brandeis.

Susan P. Fendrick is Senior Research Associate for the Initiative on Bridging Scholarship and Pedagogy at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University, and a member of the planning team for this conference. She graduated from Brown University and received rabbinic ordination at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, and is an alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship program. She has been a teacher of adult Jewish education in a variety of settings, and served as a member of the bibliodrama faculty along with Peter Pitzele (with whom she trained) at the Institute for Contemporary Midrash. She has served as founding editor of *SocialAction.com* and managing editor of *MyJewishLearning.com*. Her writing has appeared in numerous publications including *The Women's Torah Commentary* and *The Women's Haftarah Commentary*, *The Women's Seder Sourcebook*, the haggadah *A Night of Questions*, the journals *Sh'ma* and *Living Text*, and in several online magazines.

Shawn Fields-Meyer serves as Rabbi-in-Residence at the Milken Community High School, and as Instructor in Bible at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, both in Los Angeles. She is founder and Executive Director of Ozreinu, a network of Torah-study/spiritual support groups for Jewish parents of special-needs children. She is co-author of the book *A Day Apart: Shabbat at Home*, a practical and spiritual guide to the home rituals of Shabbat.

Charlotte Elisheva Fonrobert is Associate Professor of Religious Studies and Co-Director of the Taube Center for Jewish Studies at Stanford University. She teaches classes on rabbinic Judaism and on biblical interpretation in Judaism and Christianity. Her most recent publication is *The Cambridge Companion to the Talmud and Rabbinic Literature*, co-edited with Prof. Martin Jaffee.

Steven Fraade is the Mark Taper Professor of the History of Judaism at Yale University. His research, writing, and teaching focuses on the history and literature of Judaism of Hellenistic and Roman times, with particular attention to questions of scriptural interpretation and legal rhetoric in the texts of the Dead Sea Scrolls and early rabbinic Judaism.

Chaim Galfand is the School Rabbi for Perelman Jewish Day School's Forman Center and Stern Center in the Philadelphia suburbs, working with students, parents, and faculty. Ordained at the Jewish Theological Seminary, where he was a Wexner Graduate Fellow, he also holds a law degree from Penn Law School. He has taught in camps, schools, congregations, and adult education settings.

Michael Gillis is a member of the faculty of the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at the Hebrew University. His work is concerned with the ways in which different paradigms of reading rabbinic literature can be a resource for teaching and curriculum. He served for five years as the head of education of Revivim, an honors program for the preparation of teachers of Jewish studies in Israeli non-religious high schools.

Elliot Goldberg is the Director of Religious Life at the Chicagoland Jewish High School. He was awarded a Wexner Graduate Fellowship to study at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (JTSA), where he received a master's degree in Jewish education and rabbinic ordination. Rabbi Goldberg completed the Senior Educators Program at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and the Day School Leadership Training Institute at the Davidson School at JTSA.

Elyse Goldstein is the Director and founding rabbi of Kolel: The Adult Centre for Liberal Jewish Learning, the first liberal Jewish adult education center in Canada and one of a few in North America. She speaks and consults widely on adult Jewish education. Her numerous articles have appeared in both scholarly and popular journals. She is the author of *ReVisions: Seeing Torah through a Feminist Lens* and *Seek Her Out*, and editor of *The Women's Torah Commentary*, and *The Women's Haftarah Commentary*. She is the 2005 recipient of the Covenant Award for Exceptional Jewish Educators.

Jay Harris is the Harry Austryn Wolfson Professor of Jewish Studies at Harvard University. He has a Ph.D. in Religion from Columbia University, and an MA in Talmud from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He taught for a number of years at both institutions. He is the author of *How Do We Know This? Midrash and the Fragmentation of Modern Judaism*, among other works.

Pinchas Hayman received rabbinical ordination at the Rabbi Yitzchak Elchanan Theological Seminary of Yeshiva University (YU), and an MA in Talmudics and Semitic Languages from the Bernard Revel Graduate School at YU, where he also completed his doctorate. Among other positions, he has served on the faculty of department of Talmud at Bar Ilan University, as head of the Oral Tradition unit of the Teacher's Diploma program of the School of Education at Bar Ilan, and as the Director of the Joseph H. Lookstein Center for Jewish Education in the Diaspora. Rabbi Dr. Hayman is the founder of Bonayich Educational Services, which is engaged in the production of curricula, and teaching and learning materials for the teaching of Mishnah and Talmud in primary, secondary and post-secondary educational institutions. He consults on a fulltime basis with over 150 educational institutions in Israel and around the world.

Nathaniel Helfgot is chair of the Bible and Jewish Thought departments at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School in New York City. He has published numerous essays in English and Hebrew in the areas of Bible and exegesis, and is the editor of *Community, Covenant and Commitment: Selected Letters and Communications of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik* (Toras HoRav Foundation/Ktav Publishing Co.). Rabbi Helfgot taught in various yeshiva high schools for 15 years, and is an occasional consultant to schools throughout the country. He is an alumnus of the Mandel Jerusalem Fellows program.

Avital Campbell Hochstein is a fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem and leads the Jewish Studies Bet Midrash at their new Midrasha LeBanot Girls' High School. She heads the Kollel program at the Pardes Institute in Jerusalem. She has been involved in adult education, mainly in teaching Talmud, for the last 15 years. Her book *Women Out, Women In: The Place of Women in Midrash* with Prof. Chana Safrai, was published recently in the *Yahadut Kan VeAchshav* series of Yediyot Achronot Press.

Elie Holzer is an Assistant Professor in the School of Education at Bar Ilan University and a Senior Research Associate at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education in Brandeis. He holds a PhD in Jewish thought from Hebrew University as well as rabbinical ordination. He has taught in high schools and a variety of Jewish adult learning institutions in Israel and in the US, as well as in a yeshivat hesder. He also works as a consultant in the field of professional development in Jewish education. His current fields of research and publication focus on the conceptualization and pedagogical application of text study and hevruta learning in light of philosophical hermeneutics; the connection between professional development of teachers, text study and hevruta learning; and philosophy of religious education.

Jane Kanarek is Assistant Professor of Rabbinics at Hebrew College, where she teaches Talmud and halakha in the Rabbinical School. An alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship, she received a B.A. from Brown University, rabbinic ordination from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. During the summer, she is a co-director of the Northwoods Kollel, a full-time learning program at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin.

Lawrence Kaplan is Professor of Rabbinics and Jewish Philosophy in the Department of Jewish Studies of McGill University. He specializes and has published widely in the areas of both medieval and modern Jewish thought. He is perhaps best known for his translation from the Hebrew of Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik's classic work, *Halakhic Man*. His study "Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik and Halakhic Man" appeared in the recent *Cambridge Companion to Modern Jewish Philosophy*.

Elliot Kaplowitz serves as co-Director of the Jewish Learning Initiative on Campus, and Advisor to the Orthodox Community at Brandeis University. He received his rabbinic ordination from Yeshivat Chovevei Torah. He received a combined BA/MA from Brandeis in Near Eastern and Judaic studies, and worked as the Iyyun Fellow at Hillel's International Center in Washington, DC. He has taught in a number of settings, including the JCC in Manhattan and a number of synagogues across the country.

Susan Kardos is the Director of the Initiative for Day School Excellence at the Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston and a research affiliate at the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard University. Dr. Kardos is the author of over a dozen articles and chapters about teacher culture, school improvement and school leadership and the author of " 'Not Bread Alone': Clandestine Schooling and Resistance in the Warsaw Ghetto during the Holocaust" (*Harvard Educational Review*, 2002) and co-author of *Finders and Keepers: Helping New Teachers Survive and Thrive in Our Schools* (Jossey Bass, 2004).

Judith Kates, Professor of Jewish Women's Studies at Hebrew College, has been teaching Tanakh, midrash and *parshanut* in Hebrew College's trans-denominational Rabbinical School since its inception. She has taught Tanakh and midrash in many programs of adult Jewish education since 1987. Among her publications are two essays on rabbinic midrash in *Scrolls of Love: Ruth and the Song of Songs*, eds. Lesleigh Cushing Stahlberg and Peter S. Hawkins (Fordham University Press, 2006).

Alvan Kaufner is a Rabbi at Temple Emanu-El in Providence R.I., and is an Adjunct Instructor in Jewish Education at the Rabbinical School of Boston's Hebrew College and at the Davidson School of the Jewish Theological Seminary. He completed his doctorate in Jewish Education at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America; his dissertation was on teaching midrash in the day school setting.

Orit Kent is co-director of the Beit Midrash Research Project at the Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University, where she also teaches in the DeLeT program. She is an alumna of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship program and is completing her doctorate in Judaic Studies and Education at Brandeis, focusing on hevruta learning. Her research interests also include the teaching and learning of Jewish texts, teacher professional development, and alternative leadership paradigms. She has taught in a wide variety of educational contexts and worked as an educational consultant in the Boston area.

Reuven Kimelman is a Professor of Classical Judaica at Brandeis University. Previously, he was Joseph Shier Distinguished Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Toronto, and Five College Professor of Judaic Studies at Amherst College. He has also taught at Mount Holyoke, Smith, Trinity and Williams colleges as well as at the Jewish Theological Seminary and the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He is the author of the Hebrew work, *The Mystical Meaning Of "Lekhah Dodi"* and *"Kabbalat Shabbat"*, and three audio books, including *The Moral Meaning of the Bible: The What, How, and Why of Biblical Ethics* as well as *The Hidden Poetry of the Jewish Prayerbook: The What, How, and Why of Jewish Liturgy*. His latest book is the forthcoming *The Rhetoric Of Jewish Prayer: A Historical And Literary Commentary On The Prayerbook*.

Aryeh Klapper received ordination from RIETS at Yeshiva University (YU), and an MA in Bible from YU's Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies, where he also did extensive graduate coursework in Talmud. He teaches Rabbinic Literature at Gann Academy, and is Dean of The Center for Modern Torah Leadership, which combines halakhic commitment and rigorous traditional study with pedagogic innovation, gratitude for the spiritual challenges of modernity, and a deep commitment to seeing the tzelem elokim in every person. His most recent publications discuss the ethics of torture and the existence and parameters of a halakhic obligation to prevent genocide. His curricular projects include "Teaching Talmud Systematically", a conceptual understanding of the role of keywords in Talmud that generates specific strategies for individual teaching and schoolwide progression and enables integrated discussion of content and skills curricula.

David Kraemer is Professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he also serves as Joseph J. and Dora Abbell Librarian (director of the library). As Librarian, Prof. Kraemer is at the helm of the most extensive collection of Judaica—rare and contemporary—in the Western hemisphere. A prolific author and commentator, Prof. Kraemer's books include *The Mind of the Talmud* (Oxford, 1990), *Responses to Suffering in Classical Rabbinic Literature* (Oxford, 1995), and *The Meanings of Death in Rabbinic Judaism* (Routledge, 2000), among others. His most recent book is *Jewish Eating and Identity Through the Ages* (Routledge, 2007). He has been associated for many years with CLAL: The National Jewish Center of Learning and Leadership, and has been a teacher at The New York Kollel (Hebrew Union College), The Skirball Institute for Adult Jewish Study (Temple Emanuel), and Meah (Hebrew College of Boston).

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Ruth Langer is Associate Professor of Jewish Studies in the Theology Department at Boston College and Associate Director of its Center for Christian-Jewish Learning. Her publications focus on issues in Jewish liturgy and in Jewish-Christian relations. At Boston College, a Jesuit and Catholic university, the overwhelming majority of her students are Christians.

Marjorie Lehman is assistant professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Her scholarly interests are focused on the Ein Yaakov about which she is now writing a book. In addition to her scholarly work and published articles in the field of Talmud and gender studies, she has published in the area of Talmud and Jewish Education. Her articles, "For the Love of Talmud: Reflections on the Study of Bava Metzia, Perek 2," "The Babylonian Talmud in Cognitive Perspective: Reflections on the Nature of the Bavli and its Pedagogical Implications," and "Rediscovering 'Women' in the Talmudic Corpus: The Impact of Gender Studies on the Teaching of Talmudic Literature" have appeared in the *Journal of Jewish Education*.

Marcie Lenk, the Schimberg Fellow at Harvard University, is a doctoral candidate in Early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism. She is the Academic Director of Me'ah in New York. Marcie has taught in Hebrew College's Me'ah program, at the Skirball Center at Temple Emanuel in New York City, at City College of New York, at Ma'ayan in Boston, and at the Drisha Institute in NY. While living in Jerusalem for twelve years, she was on the Talmud faculty at Midreshet Lindenbaum and taught Bible and Rabbinics at Pardes. She also taught at several Christian seminaries in Jerusalem, including the Tantur Ecumenical Institute, the Swedish Theological Institute and Ecce Homo Convent. She has an MS in Bible and a BA in Judaic Studies and Mathematics from Yeshiva University, and MTS from Harvard Divinity School.

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Sarra Lev teaches Talmud and midrash at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in religious studies from York University, rabbinic ordination and a master of arts in Hebrew letters from RRC, and a doctorate in rabbinic literature from New York University. A member of several Jewish communities, she has taught courses on Judaism for programs and institutions including Jewish Alive & American, the Feminist Center of the American Jewish Congress, New York University, as well as Bat Kol: A Feminist House of Study, which she co-founded. She believes that the role of the rabbi is, above all, to engage in social justice as a function of living a life connected to the divine, and teaches rabbinic texts with great love and deep critique towards that end. Her primary areas of interest are gender and power in rabbinic texts.

Judd Kruger Levingston teaches rabbinics and Jewish history at the Robert Saligman Middle School, Perelman Jewish Day School and is an adjunct member of the Religion department at Temple University. A graduate of Harvard College (AB) and the Jewish Theological Seminary (MA, Rabbi, PhD), he has received an AVI CHAI technology grant to develop an online siddur, and is currently working on a book entitled *Thou Shalt Not Moralize: Moral Education in Public and Private Schools*, to be published by Praeger/Greenwood in 2009.

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Dov Linzer is Rosh HaYeshiva and Dean of Yeshivat Chovevei Torah Rabbinical School. Rabbi Linzer received ordination from the Israeli Rabbinate and is a recipient of the Javits Graduate Fellowship. Previously the head of the Boca Raton Kollel, Rabbi Linzer spearheaded the development of the YCT Rabbinical School curriculum, shaping an innovative four-year smicha program which provides its students with rigorous halakhic study and sophisticated professional training in the context of a religious atmosphere which cultivates openness and inclusiveness.

Shari L. Lowin is Assistant Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at Stonehill College where she teaches courses on both Jewish and Muslim intellectual thought and intellectual history. She received her PhD from the University of Chicago. Her recent book, *The Making of a Forefather: Abraham in Islamic and Jewish Exegetical Narratives*, examines the mutual influences of *hadith* and *midrash aggadah* on one another on the creation of their depictions of this shared patriarch.

Benjamin Mann is the Head of the Middle School and Jewish Studies Coordinator of the Solomon Schechter School of Manhattan. Previously, he taught Humash and served as Middle School Coordinator of Special Services and Judaic Studies Curriculum at the Solomon Schechter Day School of Bergen County. He holds master's degrees in Judaic Studies from the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and in Learning Disabilities from Teachers College of Columbia University.

Claudia Marbach has been teaching at JCDS, Boston's Jewish Community Day School, since 1999. She teaches *Torah she-b'al peh* ("Toshba") and continues to develop the Toshba and Judaics curriculum in the Middle School. Claudia spent a year at a women's yeshiva in Israel, and studied at Drisha in New York. She has a BA in English from Barnard College and a law degree from Boston University.

Evyatar Marienberg, originally from Israel, studied theology at the Institut Catholique de Paris and received his doctorate from the School of Social Sciences (EHESS), also in Paris. His main fields of interest are contemporary Catholicism and medieval Jewish law. Currently on leave from the Department of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary where he is an Assistant Professor, he is a Starr Fellow at Harvard University.

Vivie Mayer is the Director of the Beit Midrash and the Director of the Mechinah program at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. A 1996 graduate of RRC, she has returned there to teach after ten years of serving as a congregational rabbi in Danbury, Connecticut. She was raised and educated in Modern Orthodox communities, and lived and taught in Israel for seven years.

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Joshua Moss teaches rabbinics at the American Hebrew Academy, a boarding/day high school in Greensboro, North Carolina. He also serves as a houseparent in a residential house and supervisor of the Reform minyan. Previously he taught at Wright State University (Dayton, Ohio) and Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Cincinnati, Ohio), where he earned his Ph.D. in Rabbinic Literature. His dissertation has been published by Gorgias Press, and is titled *Midrash and Legend: Historical Anecdotes in the Tannaitic Midrashim*.

Robin Nafshi currently directs Rimon: Collaborative Jewish Learning in MetroWest. Rimon has brought together 45 synagogues and agencies to share resources and collaborate on adult Jewish learning programs. She was ordained by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in 2005, where she was a Wexner Graduate Fellow, and served as Assistant Rabbi at Temple Emeth in Teaneck upon ordination. Her interest in adult Jewish learning dramatically grew when she was selected to participate in the Wexner Heritage Foundation program for lay leaders in San Francisco from 1996-1998.

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George Nudell has been the Rabbi of Congregation Beth Israel in Scotch Plains, NJ since August 1982, after being ordained that year at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. Born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, he did his undergraduate work at the University of Minnesota earning a B.A. in Hebrew and a B.S. in Secondary Education-Foreign Language. He has worked in the field of Jewish Education for the past 36 years.

Aaron Panken is Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), where he served as Dean and Dean of Students at the New York Campus from 1996-2007, and has taught Second Temple and Rabbinic Literature since 1995. A graduate of Johns Hopkins University, HUC-JIR (where he was ordained in 1991) and New York University (from which he received a PhD in 2003), his ongoing research interests include the change and growth of Jewish law during the rabbinic period (70-600 CE), the application of rabbinic texts to modern reality, and the intersection between science and religion. He recently published *The Rhetoric of Innovation* (University Press of America, 2005), which explores legal change in rabbinic texts, and is currently at work on a book-length history of Hanukkah.

Carl Perkins has been the rabbi of Temple Aliyah in Needham, MA, since 1991. He was educated at Haverford College, Harvard Law School, and the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, where he was ordained and awarded a master's degree in Talmud and Rabbinics. A former Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellow and Wexner Graduate Fellow, he recently became a Senior Rabbinic Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. He is an Adjunct Instructor in Rabbinics at the Hebrew College Rabbinical School and has taught Rabbinics in the Hebrew College Me'ah Program and in the Me'ah Graduate Institute. He is the author of the revised edition of *Embracing Judaism* (Rabbinical Assembly, 1999), an introduction to Judaism and guide for Jews by choice.

Ellen Pildis is the School Rabbi and Director of Jewish Studies at The Rashi School. She is a graduate of Stern College of Yeshiva University, and obtained a Master's Degree in Special Education from Boston College as well as a Masters Degree in Jewish Studies from Hebrew College. She was ordained by Aleph: The Alliance for Jewish Renewal, and hopes to infuse people with a deep love for Jewish life, Jewish teachings and Jewish spiritual practices. She brings to the rabbinate a background in special education and clinical social work; her work experience includes substance abuse counseling and family systems therapy, as well as pastoral counseling in a hospital setting. Before coming to The Rashi School, Rabbi Pildis worked at Temple Beth Zion in Brookline, Massachusetts, an independent congregation offering a full array of opportunities for Jews from all backgrounds and all ages.

Helen Plotkin is the cofounder and director of the Beit Midrash at Swarthmore College, a joint project of the College Library and the Department of Religion, where she teaches classical Hebrew and Jewish texts. She is a senior rabbinical student at RRC. She also holds the position of family educator at Congregation Beth Israel in Media, PA, where she teaches adults, families, and teens.

Daniel Reifman is a lecturer in halakhah at Midreshet Lindenbaum and Midreshet AMIT in Jerusalem. He spent three years studying at Yeshivat Shaalvim, earned a B.A. from Columbia College, and received rabbinic ordination and an M.A. in Bible from Yeshiva University. For the past five years, Rabbi Reifman has taught the advanced halakhah class for the Scholars' Circle program at the Drisha Institute. He has also taught Talmud and Halakhah at Yeshivat Chovevei Torah.

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Deena Sigel has taught Torah for fifteen years to adults and children in various informal and formal educational settings in the US, England and Israel. She currently resides in Jerusalem, and is completing her educational doctorate (EdD) at the Institute of Education at the University of London, on investigating children's understandings of midrash and developing pedagogy for midrash at the elementary school level. Her work has been presented at a number of international educational conferences.

Moriah SimonHazani, a native of Jerusalem, received rabbinic ordination from the Schechter Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem. She is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Pennsylvania in the Near Eastern Language and Civilization department. Since her ordination, Rabbi SimonHazani has taught rabbinic texts and Hebrew literature to rabbinical students.

Shawn SimonHazani is the Rav Beit Hasefer at the Robert Saligman Middle School of the Raymond and Ruth Perelman Jewish Day School. He was ordained at the Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in Los Angeles. He currently teaches a class on Rabbi as Educational Leader at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

Alex Sinclair is co-director of Melamdin, the teacher education program at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem, and adjunct assistant professor of education at the Jewish Theological Seminary.

Moshe Sokolow is the Fanya Gottesfeld Heller Professor of Jewish Education at the Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration and Professor of Bible at Yeshiva University. He has just published *Hatzi Nehama: Studies in the Weekly Parashah* based on the Lessons of Nehama Leibowitz (Jerusalem: URIM, 2007), and has been awarded a grant from the Covenant Foundation for a project entitled "Reclaiming Interpretation". He studied with Leibowitz, and translated and edited *Nehama Leibowitz: On Teaching Tanakh* (New York: 1987), *Nehama Leibowitz: Active Learning in the Teaching of Jewish History* (New York: 1989), and compiled *Mafteah ha-Gilyonot: An Index to Nehama Leibowitz's Weekly Parshah Sheets* (New York: 1993). Rabbi Dr. Sokolow is the author of numerous scholarly and popular articles on Bible, and has conducted a weekly class on the weekly *parasha* at Lincoln Square Synagogue in New York City for more than twenty years.

Bradley Solmsen is the director of two summer programs for high school students at Brandeis University: BIMA and Genesis. BIMA is a summer institute for talented high school students allowing them to take their artistic skills to a higher level in a supportive, creative Jewish environment. Genesis is a pluralistic summer program integrating Jewish studies, social action and community building. He is also the associate director of the Institute for Informal Jewish Education at Brandeis. Rabbi Solmsen was ordained at Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, and received a master's degree in Jewish education from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He has held fellowships at the Melton Centre Senior Educator's Program at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and at the Institute for Informal Jewish Education. He has extensive experience as a Jewish educator in Israel and the US, working with teenagers and college students and training Jewish educators.

Jeffrey Spitzer is chair of the department of rabbinic literature at Gann Academy in Waltham, MA, where he teaches Talmud and midrash. He also teaches in a variety of adult education contexts, including Hebrew College's Me'ah program in Boston. He has a particular interest in using technology in his teaching, and received a Covenant Grant to develop a Rabbinics Lab, in which middle school students learned to engage in the ongoing process of conversational Torah. He received his MPhil from the Jewish Theological Seminary.

David Starr serves as Dean of the Me'ah program at Hebrew College, where he also teaches Jewish history. He is completing a biography of Solomon Schechter, and is writing a study of adulthood and adult learning in contemporary Jewish life.

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David Stern is Ruth Meltzer Professor of Classical Hebrew Literature at the University of Pennsylvania. His field of specialization is classical Jewish literature and religion. He is the author of eight books including *Parables in Midrash: Narrative and Exegesis in Rabbinic Literature*; *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature*, and *Midrash and Theory: Ancient Jewish Exegesis and Contemporary Literary Studies*. In Spring 2007, he curated the acclaimed book exhibit, "CHOSEN: Philadelphia's Great Hebraica," at the Rosenbach Museum & Library in Philadelphia and wrote the catalogue for the exhibit. He is currently writing a book tracing the material history of four classic Jewish books, one of which is the Babylonian Talmud.

Ethan Tucker is a co-founder of Mechon Hadar (www.mechonhadar.org) and teaches Talmud and halakha in the Machon's summer yeshivah, Yeshivat Hadar. He is also a faculty member at the Drisha Institute for Jewish Education, where he teaches Talmud and Halakhah in the Scholars Circle. Rabbi Tucker was ordained by the Chief Rabbinate of Israel after years of study at Yeshivat Ma'ale Gilboa, and earned a PhD in Talmud and Rabbinics from the Jewish Theological Seminary. He is a Jewish Social Entrepreneurial Fellow at the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Avraham Walfish teaches Talmud and rabbinic thought at the Herzog College in Alon Shvut, Bar Ilan University, and the Tekoah Yeshiva. An ordained Orthodox rabbi, he wrote his doctoral dissertation on the literary features of Mishnah and their meaning, and has authored numerous articles on methods of reading and teaching Mishnah, Tosefta, Talmud, and midrash.

Dvora Weisberg is Associate Professor of Rabbinics and Director of the Lainer Beit Midrash at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Los Angeles. Her primary teaching responsibilities involve introductory courses in Mishnah, Aramaic and Talmud for rabbinic and education students.

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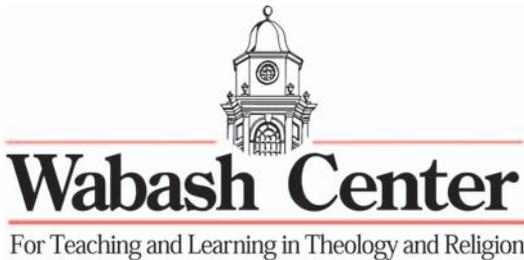
Lisa Karp Wurtele teaches the gamut of what is covered by the course title "Judaic Studies": holidays, history, Jewish texts, as well as (Jewish) current events to middle-schoolers at Tehiyah Day School (a non-denominational Jewish day school), where she has taught for the past seven years. Before moving to the Bay Area she taught Arabic and Islamic Civilization, first as a teaching fellow at Harvard (from which she received her A.M. and Ph.D. in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations) and Harvard Summer School, then as an instructor and lecturer at Harvard Extension School, at Boston University, and at Brandeis University's Near Eastern Languages Department.

NOTES

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The Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education is dedicated to transforming the quality of teaching and learning in Jewish education by supporting innovative research, pioneering new approaches to professional development, and shaping discourse in the study and practice of Jewish education.