



LIBRARY STAFF NEWS

ISSUE # 16

DECEMBER 2020

LIBRARIES REOPEN: Julie Auster Explains the Testing Program



1 - Rachel models YU mask .Photo by Rachel Berliner.

Library facilities re-opened on October 21 at 9:00 a.m. Re-arrangement of seating and computer commons has occurred to facilitate social distancing. Study rooms will have single occupancy, and masks are required.

In addition, Julie Auster of Human Resources explained, YU is implementing a proactive COVID-19 monitoring testing program to help identify any positive cases on campus before they spread. For the present time, the COVID Monitoring Program will be a saliva-based test run by Cayuga Medical Systems (CMS). CMS has been working with Cornell University since the inception of the pandemic (in addition to many other reputable universities in NY) and is recognized as one of the leading medical systems in NY State.

Saliva PCR testing on campus began for students on October 26th and two days later for staff. In addition, testing on a random selection of 25% of on-campus employees once a week was instituted.

About the test:

- The test is very simple - Just show up at the designated time and location, provide your Name, Date of Birth and YU ID, and then you will go to a testing area where you will need to put a sample of your saliva into a tube. It's simple and non-invasive.
- The entire process, from arrival at the testing location until the end of the test, should be about 15-30 minutes.
- In addition, Facilities is distributing YU-logoed masks.

Over the past few weeks, we have been so glad to welcome many of our undergraduate students back to campus. They are being protected by a strict set of safety protocols and a code of behavior that obliges everyone on campus to protect one another with masks, social distancing, temperature checks and twice-a-week COVID-19 monitoring tests, to name just a few of the rules now in effect. --*The View from YU, Nov. 2*

If the University is aware that an employee or student has received a positive test result or otherwise has COVID symptoms:

- The University will contact them to determine when/where they were last on campus; and with whom on campus they had close contact (less than 6 feet) for 15 minutes (or longer) over a 24-hour period.
- The University will contact all students and employees who it knows may have been exposed to a positive case and will direct them to quarantine and consult their medical provider.

The YU ID card will be deactivated until their isolation or quarantine period has been completed.

LUNCHTIME LEARNING: “We’re All in on This”: YAIR Tribute to Dr. Mayer Herskovics, z”l by Stephanie L. Gross

Synopsis by Chaya Sarah (Hallie) Cantor



From the work of one, the work of many.

In her “Tribute to Mayer (Majer) Herskovics, z”l,” Stephanie Gross has shown: even while working miles from Washington Heights since mid-March, no one at YU is ever truly alone. The accidental recluse “stepped out” of her Brooklyn apartment—sorry, office --and appeared before dozens in our latest Lunchtime Learning session, held Thursday, Oct. 15th, via Zoom, jointly with the Association of Jewish

Libraries (AJL), New York Metropolitan Area (NYMA) chapter. Hosted by Rina Krautwirth, who is co-president of AJL-NYMA, Stephanie gave meaty PowerPoint tips for librarians, archivists, and scholars on how to survive and even thrive – together--under these strange times.

During the highlight of her talk, Stephanie gave credit where credit was due. While the genesis and preparation were hers, her recent project—saving a YU dissertation from near-oblivion—would never have gotten off the ground without the help of others, whom no pandemic could force apart.

Re-Jew-venate!

Ordinarily, Muggles might have sat at home, waiting it out while brooding over COVID-19. Instead Stephanie seized and exploited a crisis for growth--a chance to “Reset & Retool & Rejuvenate.” Addressing fellow librarians (and shut-ins) on “[Self-Directed Achievement](#) (SDA),” she described opportunities for professional development, and listed online resources available to those wanting to use the free time to hone their skills or to network. Among them is AJL’s mentoring program, in which Stephanie herself was involved. Funding and learning are also available through YU’s union, “[1199SEIU Training & Employment](#).”

Discussing the role of libraries as guardians of intellectual and historical content, Stephanie focused on the rise of repositories, in particular our Yeshiva Academic Institutional Repository (YAIR). Part of the strategic plan initiated by Paul Glassman in 2016 to broaden the library’s mission, YAIR contains uploads of numerous and diverse contributions from YU’s faculty, students, staff, schools, and departments. The acronym *yair*—Hebrew for “light”—was Stephanie’s idea, “because the Hebrew name means that it will ‘give light,’ and we’re hoping this is what it will accomplish.”

Stephanie is proud of YAIR, which has received positive feedback from content creators – even a write-up in our student newspaper *The Commentary*. “It makes me all the more excited in wanting to work harder,” she declared.

Work of their Hands

What makes a good repository? Showing a variety of samples, Stephanie explained how items may be organized according to author or subject matter. Curation means deciding what photos, clippings, podcasts, recordings, articles, etc., might be suitable or relevant, and what might involve copyright issues.

Nowadays Word, PDF, audio or video files can be easily deposited and integrated into YAIR. But what about a work 70 years old? A work in print only, appearing at a time when “high tech” was black-and-white TV?

Enter the Mayer Herskovics project. For Stephanie, it was truly a labor of love, created entirely and methodically from a home laptop, and a golden opportunity to reconnect or engage purposefully with others beyond the screen.

The saga actually began earlier when Rebekah Shoemake was trying to satisfy an ILL request for *Halakah and Aggadah in Onkelos*, Rabbi Herskovics’s 1950 YU dissertation. But ProQuest yielded the following

message: *This graduate work is not available to view or purchase.* Rebekah then crowdsourced this query to Sandra E. Moore, Hao Zeng, Rebecca Malamud, and Stephanie.

“We’re all in on this,” Stephanie announced. Time to make a YU work public.

Rebecca got the ball rolling. With an inkling that the author had passed away, she searched his name through the Geni.Com website. Through another website, Geneanet, Tina Weiss located the deceased’s daughter: Geulah Grossman, living in Israel. Stephanie looked up Ms. Grossman, a therapist, on the latter’s personal website and on LinkedIn. Stephanie introduced herself, asking for a consent form to release the dissertation. (Ms. Grossman herself was among the Zoom attendees.)

Stephanie and Ms. Grossman continued to communicate, the latter sending her father’s impressive bibliography and a general bio (plus headshot) via Hebrew Wikipedia. Stephanie even created an account on Hebrew Wikipedia to link the dissertation citation directly to the [freely accessible PDF](#) in YAIR.

At Rebecca’s urging, Stephanie included stock photos to dramatize the project being undertaken during the stringencies of the pandemic. Our own Indiana Jones, Rachel Berliner plumbed the “catacombs”—aka Gottesman basement stacks—to retrieve the aging dissertation. Its fragile pages were photocopied and scanned. Avrom Shuchatowitz wrote up an abstract, which included background of the famed Aramaic translator Onkelos. Stephanie herself wrote up a LibGuide: <https://library.yu.edu/MayerHerskovics>. (Password: Herskovics)

Stephanie gave shout-outs to Shulamith Berger and Deena Schwimmer for their Yeshiva University Libraries Digital Collections, which she combed through to find tidbits for the “family album.” It was a (no pun intended) virtual goldmine. Stephanie also thanked Rabbi Herskovics’s grandson Menachem, who had interviewed his grandfather and even provided a thesis, complete with maps, about his grandfather’s life.

“Story for the Books”

The massive collaboration behind the family album not only aided Stephanie in her quest to track down the author, but to learn a lot about him as well. By all accounts, Mayer Herskovics (1912-2003) was a remarkable man -- rabbi, professor, Zionist, patriarch, Holocaust survivor, and “thrifer,” as Stephanie stressed. Born in then Austria-Hungary, Rabbi Herskovics attended local yeshivot, obtained a rabbinic degree, and then entered the Czech army. Afterwards he attended Gymnasium (high school) in Brno, and subsequently the University of Budapest until the Nazi annexation of Hungary. Always he remained committed to Torah observance and, despite the horrors of the concentration camp, even helped a fellow prisoner, the Klausenberger Rebbe, obtain matzah for Passover. (This story, translated from the Hebrew edition of the newspaper *HaModia*, is included in the archives.)

After the war and recuperation in refugee camps, Rabbi Herskovics married and lived in Paris. He emigrated to the USA in 1948, and in 1950, in memory of his mother, who perished in the Holocaust, wrote this doctoral dissertation on Onkelos for the Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies. He taught at various New York City schools, notably Yeshiva of Flatbush High School. Among his students was Edith Lubetski.

Rabbi Herskovics also taught at YU for roughly 18 years, before he and his wife moved to Israel. In 1978, in honor of their Aliyah, “The Mayer and Esther Herskovics *Sepharim* Collection”—some 4,500 books personally owned and amassed by Rabbi Herskovics—as purchased by the Heller family and donated to the Gottesman Library.

Along with plaques, awards, letters, and accolades, Stephanie included a moving eulogy from a former student Rabbi Shalom Carmy (currently YU Assistant Professor of Jewish Philosophy and Bible). Quoting Rabbi Carmy’s testimony about his former mentor and becoming “a link in his continuing legacy,” she paused. “Wow!” she exclaimed, “I think *I’m* becoming a link in his continuing legacy.”

According to his daughter’s e-mail message, Rabbi Herskovics was busy working on revising this dissertation up to four days before his death. But, to Stephanie’s surprise, it was not his first. Back at the university, in 1943 or 1944, he had written an earlier one. Ms. Grossman described what was, in Stephanie’s words, “a story for the books.”

During the roundup of Jews, young Herskovics was captured on a train with the earlier dissertation in a briefcase on his lap. The Nazis tore it up, laughing, “Where you’re going, you won’t need this.” Ms. Grossman wrote, “But he survived, wrote 5 books, had 3 kids, 13 grandchildren, 50 great-grandchildren, and half a year ago—the first great-great-grandson was born.”

For Stephanie, this revelation was the chance to make the story shareable, “to show how important our work is, not just to those who are reading some of the content, but those whom we contact... and the process of connecting to the community.” Archivists can even have “a spiritual experience to come together and create a beautiful product.”

Stephanie ended with an overview of various software tools, websites, and how-tos on creating repositories. “Leave your comfort zone,” ran one slide, as she urged her audience to learn new things wherever they were, whatever their situation in life. Finally, she provided a list of suggested topics for future Lunchtime Learning sessions, which can be directed to J.B. Holderness, our new Chair of Staff Development, or to Rina (for AJL-NYMA).

When it comes to “workshare,” we have truly seen that there are no barriers. Thank you, Stephanie, for your immortal contribution to YAIR, and thank you, YU library staff, for doing your part.

The Slideshare link (presentation slides) is available by clicking [HERE](#).

A recording of the presentation can be viewed in the window below or on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).



2 - Stephanie Gross Leads a Retrospective on the thesis of Rabbi Dr. Mayer Herskovics z"l

REVEL MASTER'S THESES RISE FROM THE DUST

by Rebecca Malamud



Approximately two years ago I decided to embark on cataloging the Revel Master's theses. Catalogers call cataloging projects like this "retrospective conversion;" others would call such projects "spring cleaning." The goal was to catalog and process 289 obscure Master's theses from the Bernard Revel Graduate School. One of the reasons this collection is so special is because several theses were written by individuals who would eventually become important to Yeshiva University's history. When the project was conceived, I asked Leah, may she rest in peace, what she thought of the idea. She was

thrilled and felt, as I do, that records for items we own should appear in YULIS. I was determined to see this through.

Setting up the project seemed simple enough. We had to establish a timeframe, select an individual to work on the project, streamline workflow (using templates), survey the territory, observe the condition of the material, train, researching names (for authority records), have someone do the initial records, others review the work, and inventory the items.

The procedures seemed to get off to a good start, but not all things were done in a straightforward manner. For example, the timeframe changed several times during the project. On occasion, the project was stopped altogether and then resumed. As they say, things happen.

Surveying the territory was a challenge. The Revel theses are located in the basement of the Library. Not a cheery place: lack of light, musty odors, dirty floors, and dusty shelves. Personally, the place gives me the creeps. I always tell my staff “take a flashlight” and more recently, “take your cellphone.” Finding Revel Master’s theses is no different from a treasure hunt. To get to them you literally must count ranges and steps. Still, I find the treasure hunt kind of fun, even though I once ruined a new skirt by lying on the floor looking for an old thin book (with no label) that was sitting on the bottom shelf, bent like the Tower of Pisa. More often than not, Yael, a part-time student worker, retrieved the theses from the basement.

The earlier theses were originally placed in cardboard binders. The bindings ranged from acceptable to raggedy. By necessity, a binding project was created. One day, Yael picked up a very thick and heavy thesis and—yes—dropped it on the floor. The pages went flying all over the place. This reminds me of the weird sliding door on the ground floor (near Nagel’s Bagels). Flying books, books flying. Between Yael and Avrom, the thesis was put back into order and was ultimately placed into four binders, not one. This took a few hours. Things happen.

And then there was COVID-19. As the saying goes “expect the unexpected.” Yael was gone, and we had no access to the basement. As it happened, we got lucky. When Molly, who was working on the rare book project, ran out of rare books, Rachel scanned all the Revel Master’s theses catalog cards, and Molly continued where Yael left off. Eventually Molly left us and we had to continue the project while working from home. We had, by then, many records that Molly had worked on but needed professional review. We are now close to finishing cataloging these theses. The collection has generated many records and is expected to generate many name authorities as well.

COVID-19 CASES RISE IN NEW YORK STATE

The Commentator has reported that COVID-19 cases have been on the rise on campus since before Thanksgiving. Eleven COVID-19 cases were reported at Yeshiva University on the [New York School COVID-19 Report Card](#) from Nov. 21 to Dec. 2, almost tripling the total number of reported cases since [undergraduate campuses reopened](#) on Oct. 21.

The COVID-19 Tracker records on- and off-campus administered tests of students and employees on campus. YU’s [original COVID-19 Tracker](#) reported two cases between Oct. 10 and Oct. 23, and its [new one](#)—which, unlike the original, includes “Wilf and Beren Campuses” in the title—records four cases

between Nov. 7 and Nov. 20 for a total of six cases in its first month. That figure combined with the 11 newest cases brings YU's COVID-19 cases to 17 since reopening. According to the tracker, 24 students are currently quarantined on campus with 18 rooms in use.

"We are continuing to monitor for positive cases on campus," Vice Provost for Student Affairs Chaim Nissel told *The Commentator*. "Most of the cases that are listed on the DOH [Department of Health] website as of today reflect infected students who were already in quarantine prior to the holiday weekend as a result having been identified as close contacts of another infected student." Nissel explained that it's "not easy to pinpoint where people may get infected," but students are reminded to follow safety precautions and avoid social gatherings.

NYS guidelines mandate that if the lesser of 100 students or 5% of a university's on-campus population test positive within a 14-day period, all in-person learning must move online and campus activities must be limited for 14 days.

Read the full article by clicking [HERE](#).



THANKSGIVING 1905

by Shuli Berger

In 1905, the 250th anniversary of Jewish settlement in New Amsterdam was commemorated on the Sabbath before Thanksgiving. A committee on "Form of Prayer," led by Reverend Dr. Henry Pereira Mendes, was tasked with creating a service for the occasion. The choice of Mendes was appropriate, and perhaps deliberate, since he was the spiritual leader of Congregation Shearith Israel—the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue—the mother of all American congregations, dating back to 1654.

The committee published a pamphlet, in Hebrew and English, with selected Psalms and a prayer composed for the occasion. This pamphlet is housed in Yeshiva University Library's Rare Book Room.

Rev. Dr. Mendes served as an instructor of homiletics at RIETS from 1917 to 1920, and addressed its 1919 Chag HaSemicha which was celebrated at his synagogue, Congregation Shearith Israel, on Central Park West.



3 - Rev. Dr. H.P. Mendes

LIBRARY BOOK TALKS

by Zvi Erenyi

LIBRARY BOOK TALKS Fall 2020

library.yu.edu

28
OCTOBER
2020
Wednesday, 7:30-8:30 PM
Via Zoom

Rona Novick
Dean, Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish
Education and Administration
Mommy, Can You Stop the Rain?

17
NOVEMBER
2020
Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 PM
Via Zoom

Rabbi Allen Schwartz
Raymond J. Greenwald Chair
in Jewish Studies
**Conflict & Resolution in the Early
Prophets**

8
DECEMBER
2020
Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 PM
Via Zoom

Chana Stiefel
Children's Author
'90SCW
**From Stern to Scholastic:
A Journey in Children's Publishing**
Co-sponsored by Stern College for Women
Education Department and Education Club

Yeshiva University Libraries

Shulamis is the Coordinator of the Book Talk Committee, and Chaya Sarah co-planned the logistics and lists the talks on YU calendars. Tina was responsible for a lot of the planning, logistics, "Zoomology," and for moderating the Novick talk. J.B. is the "tech guy" and Zoom Manager who troubleshoots before, during, and after all the presentations. Hao set up the registration pages, and Paul did all the artistic blogs and (digital) posters. Zvi promoted the program through listservs and Jewish newspapers and ably contributed the synopses for the Staff Newsletter.

Mommy, Can You Stop the Rain?

The first of these, on the 28th of October, featured Dr. Rona Milch Novick, Dean of Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration, who discussed her children's book "Mommy Can You Stop the Rain?" The book deals with fears and anxiety faced by children in a variety of settings and, although the author developed it in response to the tragic events of 9/11, its publication was particularly apt for the present health crisis. The book instructs parents to use a language of comfort when confronted by a child's fears and the challenge of providing reassurance in uncertain times. Prof. Novick advises parents to begin with validating their child's fears rather than to try to diminish them, to speak in a manner appropriate to the child's age, to avoid overly optimistic responses and to communicate a caring attitude. She also developed specific lesson plans for the pre-K to age 12 levels.

You can view the recording of this book talk on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).

Conflict & Resolution in the Early Prophets

On Tuesday Nov. 17, 2020, Yeshiva University Libraries presented a book talk with Rabbi Allen Schwartz, Raymond J. Greenwald Chair in Jewish Studies at YU, where he has taught since 1983.

The talk was moderated by Rabbi Shalom Carmy, Assistant Professor of Jewish philosophy and Bible at Yeshiva University.

Rabbi Schwartz engaged in a vigorous and enlightening discussion on the topic of his recently published third book, *Conflict & Resolution in the Early Prophets* (New York: Kodesh Press, 2020): how to explain the many instances of seeming violations of Torah law in the books of Joshua, Judges and Samuel, where the perpetrators appear to be unaware that their actions violate Torah laws. Rabbi Schwartz argued that “Chazal [Jewish sages] were very much aware of these violations, they reacted to them, and the most important point is, that in order to lend credence to that reaction, they showed that the text itself has some kind of hint that there was something wrong.”

An example of such a violation: King David’s marriage to Michal, daughter of King Saul, her then being given away in marriage to Palti ben Layish, only to be later re-married to David. The Bible (Deut. 24:4) forbids the first husband from re-marrying his former wife if she had then married and subsequently divorced (or been widowed) from another man. Chazal had a range of answers to this problem, from arguing that, in fact, no violations were committed, to various strategies to mitigate these violations. Rabbi Schwartz limited his discussion to Chazal of the classical period, relegating comments by Rishonim to footnotes and excluding later opinions altogether.

Rabbi Schwartz also discussed an innovative strategy employed by the 13th-century *Sefer Yere'im* [commentary on the Mitzvot] to explain King David’s apparent sin in sending an embassy of peace to the Ammonites in contravention of a biblical prohibition (Deut. 23:7) by explaining that the Torah forbade initiating peace but not responding to a peace offering by the Ammonites, which was the case with David’s embassy.

In *Conflict & Resolution in the Early Prophets* (Kodesh Press), Rabbi Schwartz compiles, categorizes, and explains many violations of biblical law. In each case, he explains the parameters of the law, and shows how Chazal addressed those violations. Most interestingly for contemporary readers, Rabbi Schwartz reveals the interplay between traditional and modern Bible interpretation, while providing a unique window into the minds of sages of the Talmud and Middle Ages.

You can view the recording of this book talk on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).

From Stern to Scholastic: A Journey in Children’s Publishing

On December 8th Yeshiva University Libraries concluded its fall book series with an event co-sponsored by the Stern College for Women Education Program and Education Club. The event was moderated by Chaya Sarah. The speaker, Chana (Freiman) Stiefel, has authored more than 25 children’s books, both fiction and non-fiction, with several more soon to be published. She graduated from Stern College in 1990, and several generations in her family graduated from various YU schools as well. Stiefel traced the

genesis of her involvement with writing for children. After obtaining a graduate degree in journalism from NYU, she gained valuable experience at several publishers and magazines. She recalled how important the influence of parents and teachers was in encouraging her writing, and the vital support which colleagues, agents, and editors accorded her. She provided lengthy, detailed information. Stiefel captivated the audience with her lively, enthusiastic, humor and anecdote filled presentation and provided specific tips and resources to prospective children's book writers. She ended with two giveaways: a copy of her book *Daddy Depot* and a manuscript critique.

You can view the recording of this book talk on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).

Shulamis reports that the Book Talk Committee is already lining up the program for next semester. Stay tuned!

REALM PROJECT: Tests 5 and 6



4 - REALM project tested leather book covers for virus retention

TEST 5 Since May, OCLC has been testing and reporting on its REALM (Reopening Archives, Libraries and Museums) Project. they have partnered with Battelle Labs to determine how long coronavirus can remain on library materials commonly used in archives, libraries, and museums. The results of Test 5 are now available.

The [REALM project](#) has released results from the latest round of scientific tests to determine how long the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 can remain on materials found in archives, libraries, and museums, along with a summary of published research to help inform these institutions as they reopen to the public.

“Those who handle special collections or vintage books and materials may find the testing from this round of particular interest,” said Scott Carey, Chief Information Officer at IMLS and Deputy Director of the Office of Digital and Information Strategy. “The sample tested was an antique leather book cover, which mimics a scenario where standard cleaning methods may be undesirable. The variability of how

long the virus lasts on materials reinforces the continued importance of practicing good hygiene, following local health officials' guidance, and making informed, risk-based decisions.”

New lab test findings from Battelle show that the infectious virus survived through eight days on both natural leather and synthetic leather fabrics.

Phase 2 - Systematic literature review

This Phase 2 review includes analysis and summary of findings from available scientific literature on SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) through mid-August 2020. This review focused on studies of how the virus is spread, virus attenuation on commonly found materials, and effectiveness of prevention and decontamination measures.

Key takeaways from the review How the virus spreads

- **Droplets.** SARS-CoV-2 is generally understood to spread primarily through virus-containing water droplets expelled from infected persons from sneezes, coughs, speaking, and other respiratory activities. Evidence has also suggested that other pathways for spreading the virus may include: **Aerosols.** Breathing air that the virus is suspended in, such as after an aerosolization event (e.g., a sneeze) **Fomites.** Touching surfaces of objects where the virus has been deposited (sometimes called *fomites*), which can occur through exhaling or otherwise depositing virus-containing droplets on the surface.
- **Environment.** Environmental factors, including temperature and humidity, have been identified as influential in the spread of SARS-CoV-2. Specifically, higher temperatures, higher humidity, and increased intensity of ultraviolet (UV) light (e.g., sunlight) seem to lead to SARS-CoV-2 decaying more quickly. However, additional research is needed to understand the complexities of these variables' impact on the virus and its transmission.
- **Ventilation.** Some evidence has suggested that HVAC systems and other air circulation mechanisms can contribute to spreading the virus through the air. On the other hand, poor ventilation may also lead to airborne virus remaining in indoor environments longer. However, the impact of these systems on people contracting the virus requires further study.
- **Surfaces.** Very few studies from the review period reported novel empirical research about the survival of SARS-CoV-2 on surfaces, which highlights the REALM lab results' contribution toward this area of investigation.

Prevention and decontamination

Researchers suggested several options for reducing the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in environments, which may help prevent transmission among people in those environments:

- Frequent handwashing or hand sanitizing
- Wearing a mask that covers the mouth and nose
- Social distancing and reduced indoor occupancy
- Good air ventilation and open/outdoor spaces

- Applying certain forms of UV light or increased heat
- Applying disinfectants to contaminated surfaces and objects.

TEST 6 (released Nov. 19)

Material Types tested included Glass Windows, doors, and display cases

Marble flooring, counters, and columns

Laminate with particle board backing and countertops

Brass 260 brass fixtures and railings

Powder-coated steel lockers, shelving, book trucks, and exhibit elements

Results show that after two days, SARS-CoV-2 virus was not detectable on the brass and marble. After six days, virus was not detected on the glass, laminate, and powder-coated steel. The brass resulted in the fastest attenuation rate: after one hour of drying, the virus was barely detectable. Since these materials are nonporous, suitable liquid disinfection methods may be applied. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides a list of disinfectants and surface cleaners that meet their criteria for use against SARSCoV-2.

OUR OWN MACRO!

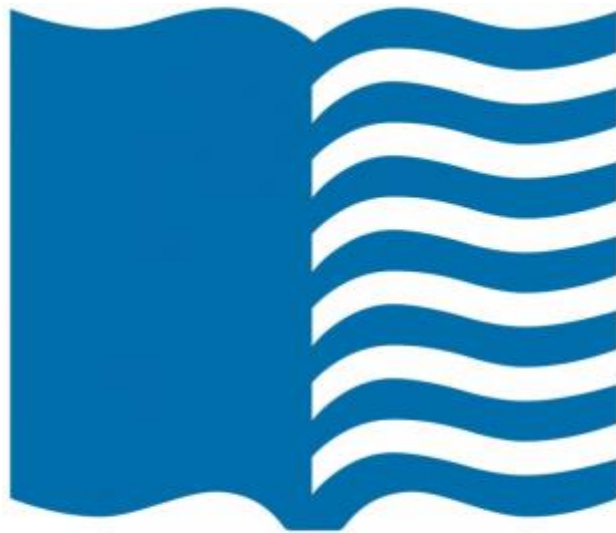
by Marlene Schiffman



While printing out labels in the OCLC program, we have found that the diacritics in Hebrew names and titles do not position properly on the labels. Our solution is to eliminate the diacritics for label printing altogether; we have been doing this manually. It occurred to me that we could do this much more efficiently with a macro that would remove the diacritics not one by one, but all at once. We already

have macros to duplicate fields, add the rda fields for various formats (book, CDs, videos, etc.), generate a code for a place name mentioned in the subject heading, and many others. So why not a macro to eliminate diacritics? I contacted Walter Nickeson at the University of Rochester. who specializes in creating macros used in cataloging. He was eager to help, and programmed a macro for us that does just what we need. I copied it into my computer and applied it to a record. Immediately, all the diacritics in the Hebrew author and title disappeared. Walt was kind enough to share the macro with all our colleagues, so I sent it to our staff and inquired on Hasafran if people were interested in having such a macro. When I got a few positive responses from Judaica librarians, I posted the macro on Hasafran (with Walt's permission) so that others could access it. The macro works on other languages too-- French, Spanish, etc. It will certainly make our life easier!

OUR OWN ISSN!



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

An ISSN (International Standard Serial Number) identifies all continuing resources, irrespective of their medium (print or electronic):

- newspapers,
- annual publications (reports, directories, lists, etc.),
- journals,
- magazines,
- collections,

- websites,
- databases,
- blogs,etc.

Recently YAIR received an official **ISSN #2766-1016** from the Library of Congress. ISSN numbers are similar to ISBNs for books. Since YAIR is a database, it falls in the category of a serial. Having an international listing increases discoverability. And, of course, the number is unique to YAIR.

LEAH ADLER Z"l MEMORIAL BOOK

by Zvi Erenyi



An Editorial Committee to assemble a book of tribute to memorialize Leah Adler z"l was constituted over the past year. Members of the committee are Dr. Richard White, Zvi, Marlene, Shuli, Shulamis, and Moshe. A meeting was held on October 13 to determine issues of layout and format. The Committee discussed the title, fonts, size of the proposed book, type of paper (especially what paper would be best for the illustrations), and the writing of an introduction. Dr. White reported on the state of the manuscript: contributions are still coming in. Another editorial meeting will soon be held to finalize the layout and assign portions for proofreading. The book will be published by Gottesman Library, of which Leah, z"l, was the Head, and will distributed to those who attended the memorial gathering and to Judaica libraries in the U.S. and abroad.

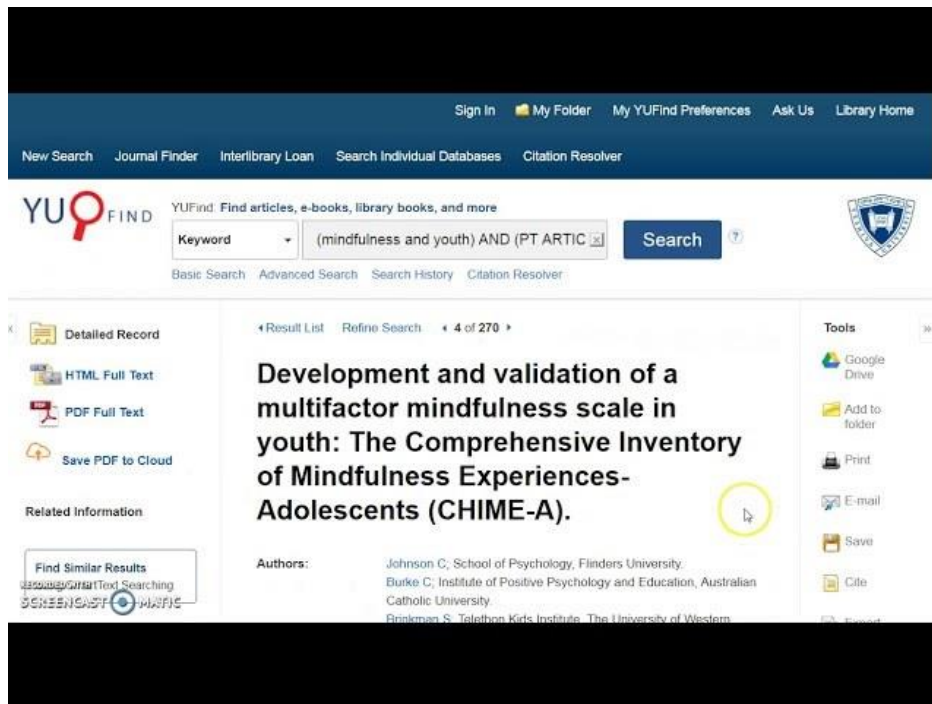
NEW VIDEO ON SEARCH STRATEGIES

by Marlene Schiffman

A new instructional YouTube video has been created by Wendy Kosakoff that takes the library user who is writing a paper from YU Find through the research process. After searching for terms, Wendy shows how to limit the search by date, more specific subject term, and format--e.g. articles only. She then recommends that one pick an article and read the abstract. If the article is relevant to the research, the full text may be saved and a citation generated for later use in the bibliography of the paper. After

learning this process, it becomes easy to search YU Find for materials and save search results and citations.

You can view the video in the window below or on YouTube by clicking [HERE](#).



5 - Wendy Kosakoff demonstrates how to search using the YU Find tool.

LIBRARY SHORTS



TEXTBOOK ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM LAUNCHES

YU Libraries received a [LYRISIS](#) Ideas Award to launch a pilot project in [OER](#) (open educational resources) and textbook alternatives. SPARC concluded that students worry more about textbook costs than the cost of tuition. Sy Syms School of Business professors Tamar Avnet (Marketing Capstone), Gabriela Coiculescu (Principles of Finance), and Moshe Bellows (Angel and Venture Capital) are the first cohort of participants.

LIBRARY HOMEPAGE INTRODUCES GRAPHIC LINKS

Hao Zeng, Head of Library Web & Digital Services, has added [graphic links](#) to frequently used services, such as COVID-19 resources, booking research consultations, and the off-campus access guide.

RANDOM FACT

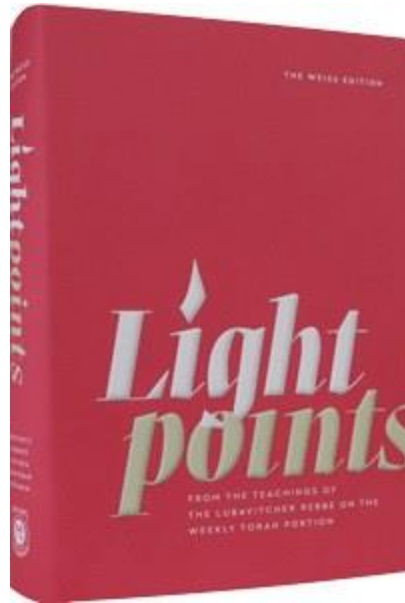
When you search OCLC, you are searching amongst 482 million records and 2.9 billion library holdings.



6 - The amount of jokes about coronavirus has reached worrying numbers.

Scientists claim we are in the middle of a pandemic.

LIGHTPOINTS: New Publication edited by Chaya Sara (Hallie) Cantor



As member of its editorial board, Chaya Sara Cantor contributed to *Lightpoints From the Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe on the Weekly Torah Portion* and donated complimentary copies for the Hedi Steinberg and Gottesman Libraries. The book is a collection of illuminating insights from the Lubavitcher Rebbe on the Torah that conveys profound points in a light manner. Originally disseminated each weekday in print and email to a diverse audience, *Lightpoints* contains many first-ever English adaptations of classic Hasidic sources. This collection aims to provide the English-speaking community with a taste of the Rebbe's vast contributions to Jewish scholarship. Some Lightpoints focus more on the Torah and its commentaries; others highlight the relevance of the Torah's lessons in our day and age. As their name indicates, the Lightpoints are intended to be short and easy to read, but more importantly, they are points of light to illuminate our perspective on the Torah. Published by Kehot Publication Society and Or Hachassidus, *Lightpoints* is just becoming available in [bookstores](#).

CONDOLENCES



To Edith Lubetski on the loss of her brother in October.

To Galina Topiler, whose father passed away in December at the age of 99.

SAVE THE DATE



Innovative Trends in Academic Librarianship

A Mini-Symposium

Wednesday, January 13, 2021

9am to 12:30pm

Online via the Zoom Platform (registration email to come)

Event will include presentations by:

- Linda Miles, Instruction and Reference Librarian, Hostos Community College (and prior Reference Librarian at YU)
- Bernard van Maarseveen, AskNYPL Librarian, New York Public Library
- Richard Kearney, Electronic Resources Librarian, William Paterson University
- Updates from the Steering Committee, Led by Rina Krautwirth and Rebekah Shoemake



...and that is **WHY** the
chicken crossed the road.

7 - I dream of a better tomorrow ... when chickens can cross the road and not have their motives questioned.



Happy Holidays!



Editor: Marlene Schiffman

Layout: J.B. Holderness

