

# FOCUS

UNIVERSITY OF HAIFA

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SPRING 2005

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President's Focus  
Prof. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev  
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## Battling Unjust Resolutions

"I was outraged by the utterly unjust and unjustifiable decision to boycott the University, its teachers, and researchers that was taken by the British Association of University Teachers (AUT) on the eve of this past Pesach. I was disheartened by that organization's attempt to erect barriers and obstruct the flow of ideas within the international academic community. If there was any good that emerged from the AUT's act, so reminiscent of similar actions taken in the 1930s, it has been the encouraging responses that we have received from overseas, Britain included.

In making their accusations, the authors of this campaign of vilification have chosen to adopt a three-year-old urban legend. Worse, the AUT never requested our response prior to adopting the resolution, nor did it allow our position to be presented by members of the AUT who are familiar with the facts. The case against Israeli academia, in general, and the University of Haifa, in particular, was devoid of empirical evidence and in violation of due process. Driven by a prior and prejudicial assumption of guilt, the AUT has refused to confuse itself with facts.

In actual fact, the University has demonstrated extraordinary tolerance during the past few years, when certain of its own staff transgressed common ethical standards of academic life, including efforts to disbar other faculty members from international forums. Let it be clear: the University made no attempt to expel anyone for expressing radical views.

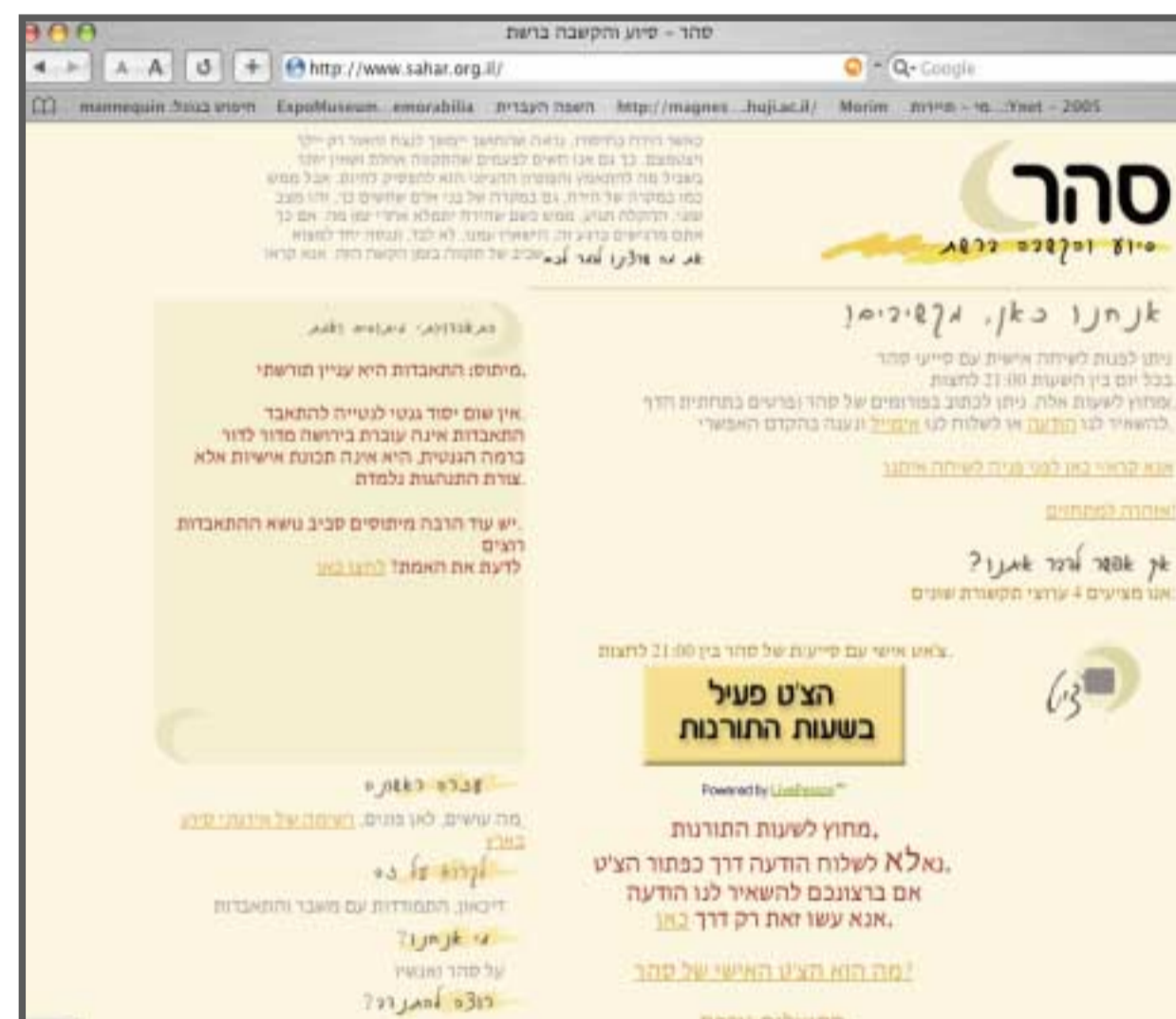
Although there is always more work to do, the University of Haifa is proud of its record of Arab-Jewish cooperation and reconciliation, both on campus and in the community. We will continue our efforts to further Jewish-Arab relations, despite politically motivated initiatives to muzzle free speech and academic discourse.

It is indeed puzzling that despite the deluge of abuses of academic freedom throughout the world, the AUT chose to focus upon a politically spurious charge and, on the basis of false allegations, to single out the University of Haifa for condemnation. We call upon the AUT to rescind its resolution, whose complete distortion of facts is in the end far more embarrassing to that body than to the University.

The academic community throughout the free world is once again put to the test. It cannot sit aside in silence, but must expressly and unequivocally reject the AUT's politically motivated abuse of academic discourse. As I mentioned, certain prominent individuals have issued encouraging responses, for which we and, I am sure, our sister university, Bar-Ilan, similarly singled out for undeserved condemnation, are grateful. But entire organizations and even governments must roundly denounce the AUT's unconscionable decision to give it its due burial.

The University of Haifa is determined not to remain passive.

## Prof. Azy Barak's SAHAR Offers a Vital Virtual Shoulder to Those with Nowhere Else to Turn



"In mid-March, Israeli TV showed the deliberately blurred picture of a 23-year-old woman sitting on a window ledge of Tel Aviv's tallest building, the 49-story Azrieli Tower. She was threatening to jump. Fortunately the incident had a peaceful resolution. It could have been otherwise.

Sahar, a Hebrew acronym for support and listening on the Net,

is a volunteer organization that tries to prevent despondency from deteriorating to such a scenario or to convince a would-be suicide to step back from the brink. Although Sahar was not involved in the incident described, it has offered vital assistance to many thousands to choose life.

The Internet-based facility was the brainchild of Prof. Azy Barak, a psychologist in the Faculty of

Education, who set up Sahar over four years ago and remains its guiding hand and the official head of the association. It was the first Web-based mental health center in the world and is still one of the few in the world that offers such assistance through the Internet.

Sahar has its work cut out for it. Officially, Israel experiences three cases of suicides every two days, and some and over 5,000 suicide attempts over the course of a year, according to Barak. The U.S., in comparison, sees 120 suicides each day. Hundreds of thousands more are in states of deep depression, resulting from financial emotional, or social distress, and from other causes that could deteriorate to a suicide attempt.

As high as these rates seem, "Sahar has significantly reduced the percentage of youth suicides in Israel," he states. Barak bases this claim on the fact that "whereas other societies have increased rates of adolescent suicides in recent years, the Israeli rate has stabilized" since the unique assistance center began

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## University Will Not Be Silent in Face of UK Boycott



Adv. Anthony Julius



Prof. Ada Spitzer

The University has determined not to remain silent in face of the boycott against the University adopted by Britain's Association of University Teachers (AUT) in April. (See President's Focus column.)

The AUT boycott resolution falsely charges the University with violations of academic freedom, states Prof. Ada Spitzer, Vice

President for External Relations and Resource Development. The British union also voted to boycott Bar-Ilan University on other grounds. Many see the resolution against the two Israeli institutions as a watered-down version of the AUT's attempt in 2003 to sever ties with all Israeli academic institutions.

The University Management

has initiated a series of steps to combat the boycott. These activities are being coordinated by Professor Spitzer, and monitored by Prof. Ron Robin. Major steps included:

- set up a rapid response team to offer immediate responses to various media outlets and internet sites abroad, as well as in Israel;
- developed a mini-website (accessible from the University's homepage) that includes a wealth of information on the boycott, the University's supporters, and adversaries;
- offering affiliate professorships to leading academic figures who have chosen to protest the boycott by becoming honorary members of the University's academic staff (this step under the direct responsibility of the Rector).
- sent two faculty members to

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# University Joins War on Drugs, Campaign Is Integral to Interdisciplinary Clinical Center

The signs suddenly popped up around Haifa like mushrooms. And it was a poisonous mushroom of sorts that they were warning against and offering help to combat its effect—drugs.

Making use of a play on words in the Hebrew, the sign, which was directed at “students and youngsters 18+,” declared: “Drugs—there is an end to it.” Or, by switching the first letter in the first word with another having the same sound, “Putting an end to it.”

The University’s Interdisciplinary Clinical Center, based in the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Studies, had enlisted in the war on growing drug abuse in Israel. It held out the prospect of counseling and therapy to users who had not yet become addicts, but faced the danger if they continued to “experiment” with drugs. Those who called the number listed were assured full discretion and secrecy.

The drug campaign is being

waged in cooperation with the Haifa and national War on Drugs Authority.

The appeals to youth to cease drug use and to come to the campus for help clearly manifest the motto of this unique Clinical Center, “Reaching the community.” According to Dr. Rivka Yahav, who heads the facility, the Clinical Center operates several other distinctive projects directed at the community at large and intended to reduce gaps. All of its projects, she stressed, combine treatment and guidance, on the one hand, and research, on the other. This approach is part of the center’s unique interdisciplinary nature.

Yahav said that the center initiated community-wide projects only when they did not already exist in the community. “We don’t want to compete,” she added to clarify the facility’s guideline.

One such project, “found nowhere else in the world,” she pointed out with a certain pride,

is called “Parents, Children, and Their Interaction.” Intended for pregnant women and parents who are planning to have a child, the project follows the family from a woman’s pregnancy through the child’s first year of life with counseling and advice provided by an interdisciplinary developmental team. Parents learn how to cope with the changes that a baby goes through and to focus attention on the child and his/her needs—from dealing psychologically and practically with the combination of motherhood and career to successful diapering, as it were.

One of the objectives of the close escort of the new family is to reduce both post-partum depression among mothers and mortality rates among infants. Meetings with parents, conducted in small groups, are held either in neighborhood clinics and centers or at the University in accordance with the participants’ request and involve professionals in the fields of psychotherapy,

clinical communication, physiotherapy, and other therapeutic fields.

Another project is the search for children in nursery schools who suffer from language, sensomotory, emotional, and social problems. The project’s pro-active approach involves the pre-screening of nursery schools in distressed neighborhoods. Parents of children with such problems receive guidance on dealing with the problems and referrals for appropriate treatment and care. Appropriately enough, the project is called “Diagnosing Problematic Children.”

Still other Clinical Center projects and workshops involve preparing children and their parents for first grade, reducing stress and fear among adolescents, helping parents of teenagers deal with their adolescents, and training sight-impaired and blind volunteers to assist newly blind persons. According to Yahav, special projects are financed by research grants; workshops and



other services may have a fee.

The Interdisciplinary Clinical Center consists of a number of institutes: Institute for Psychotherapy and Psychosocial Therapy, Institute for the Aging (Aged) Population, Institute for Physiotherapy, Institute for Human Services, Clinical Institute for Diagnosis and Treatment of

Communication, Language, Speech, and Hearing Disorders, Institute for Occupational Therapy, and the Carten Institute for Computer and Technology Uses for the Disabled. Their synergy leads to more fruitful research and, as a consequence, improved treatment in the various clinical areas.

# Kidma Project Helps Students Face Their Identities



“Maybe if you painted your face black for Purim, then you would know how I feel.”

“If I’m not an Israeli that doesn’t make me less Jewish.”

“Is it typical for Jews to leave and Arabs to stay and try to convince?”

These are some of the comments aired during a course entitled, “A Meeting of Identities: Between Gender Identity and National Identity.” Sponsored by Kidma: Project for the Advancement of Women at the University of Haifa, the class is composed of sixteen women: 8 Jewish and 8 Arab. The course meets each Tuesday for over three hours during one academic semester. The women are guided by two female facilitators

from Nisan Young Women Leaders, the only organization dedicated to the advancement of young women in Israel.

“Although Arabs and Jews are in class together, they never connect. Most of the time, they listen to the lessons. This is the first time they have to talk to each other,” explains Tali Raz, the Israeli Jewish facilitator of the group. Recognizing the situation, Kidma established this course in the spring of 2005 with the intention of facilitating dialogue among Arab and Jewish women.

Although a small group, the course includes women from a variety

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Will Allow Early-Warning between Aircraft to Prevent Collision

## Unique Algorithm Enables Better Mobile Wireless Communication

Not long before the IDF’s pullout from Lebanon, two Israeli army helicopters ferrying soldiers to the security zone inside that country collided over northern Israel shortly after take-off. There was a large loss of life. An early-warning system between the two aircrafts may have been able to prevent the tragedy. Dr. Yosi Ben-Asher, a Computer Sciences Dept. lecturer, and Sharoni Feldman, his doctoral student, have developed an algorithm that would allow building such a system.

The University’s economic arm, Carmel-Haifa University Economic Corp. Ltd., has applied for a patent in the United States for the algorithm, which will enable more efficient communication between a set of mobile wireless users without a fixed set of base stations. Fixed stations characterize cellular telephone networks. If granted, the patent would be Carmel’s second U.S.-registered discovery (see Focus, Winter 2004/05, for a story on its first patent).

The algorithm, known as the Metrical Routing Algorithm (MRA) protocol, is also the University’s first “Magneton” project. This Israeli Ministry of Industry and Trade incentive program for industry enables the transfer of technology from a university to a private industrial company in exchange for a licensed agreement benefiting the university. The ministry also funds the university

project fully and the company’s development expenses partially.

The system based on the two computer scientists’ algorithm is still in the R&D stage. The hope is that the algorithm will be adapted and improved and the system finalized and built within two years. The main contractor in this case is Israeli Aircraft Industries (IAI), while the University—through its Economic Corporation—serves as sub-contractor. Government funding will allow two research assistants to join the University development team.

Ben-Asher and Feldman developed their algorithm in the frame of an “ad-hoc” routing network. Their basic communication structure was a dynamic graph, on which new edges—“communication links with neighbors”—and nodes emerge while others are arbitrarily deleted. The developers termed such a setting “extremely difficult” and demanding new communication protocols that can “maximize the amount and length of ‘sessions’ between users.” The platforms that can make use of the system are airplanes, helicopters, unmanned drones, and other types of manned and unmanned vehicles. Initial development will concentrate on the use of the system as a collision early-warning system for helicopters.

# New Appointments



**Prof. Majid Al-Haj**  
Dean-elect of Research

**P**rof. Majid Al-Haj of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology has been elected the new Dean of Research. He presently heads the Center for Multiculturalism and Educational Research at the University. He will assume office on October 1, 2005.

Al-Haj is a 1976 graduate of the University of Haifa, and earned his M.A. here, too. He did his doctorate in Sociology at the Hebrew University and returned to Haifa as a lecturer in 1985. He became a Full Professor in 2004.

He has published more than 40 scholarly articles and written or edited several books. Two of his books are *Education, Empowerment, and Control: The Case of the Arabs in Israel* (SUNY Press, 1995) and *Immigration and Ethnic Formation in a Deeply Divided Society: The Case of the 1990s Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union in Israel* (Brill Academic Publishers, 2004).

Prior to becoming head of the

Center for Multiculturalism in 1993, he had been a member of the board of the Jewish-Arab Center for ten years. A member of the University's Board of Governors from 1988 – 1991, he is now serving a second term as a member of the University Senate.

Al-Haj will become the first Arab dean at an Israeli university. But this is actually his second "first." The sociologist was the first Arab member of Israel's Council of Higher Education, which he served from 1995-2001). Among other academic-related activities, he was a member of the central committee of the Israel Sociological Society, chaired the Committee for Advancement of Higher Education among the Arab Population in Israel. He is one of the founders of the Maof Fund for the Absorption of Arab Lecturers in Institutions of Higher Learning in Israel and has been a member of the Fund's Steering and Acceptance Committee since 1995.

Al-Haj has been a Visiting Scholar / Professor at Carleton University in Canada and at Duke University and the University of North Carolina in the U.S.A. He was an International Fellow at the Center for Refugee Research at York University, and in both 1991 and 2003 he received "The Faculty Enrichment Award" from the Canadian Government.

The Research Dean-elect is married and has four children.



**Prof. Sophia Menache**  
New Dean of Graduate Studies

**P**rof. Sophia Menache of the Department of General History is the new Dean of Graduate Studies. Professor Menache, who was born in Argentina, is an honors graduate of the University of Haifa, and went on to do her doctorate at the Hebrew University on the "Status of Papacy and the Image of the Popes in the Early Avignon Period (1305-1334)."

Menache joined the academic staff of the University in 1973. In 1984, she spent a year at Fordham University in New York as a Visiting Research Associate; and from 1995-1996, she was a Visiting Fellow at Clare Hall, Cambridge University. In 2000, she became a Full Professor at the University.

She is considered one of the world's leading experts on the

Middle Ages and her field of research includes the History of the Church, The Crusades, the History of Communication, the Status of Jews in Catholic Europe, and the Treatment of Pets in Society in the Middle Ages. Her leading publications include: *The Vox Dei: Communication in the Middle Ages* (Oxford University Press, 1990) and *Clement V* (Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Menache has served as head of the Department of General History and as Academic Head of the Pre-academic Unit at the University. She has also served on numerous committees, among them the Academic Committee for the Israel Prize (for History), the National Institute for Testing and Evaluation, the Inter-Senate Committee for Academic Freedom, and the Academic Committee for the Alon Prize. She received the Dean of Students' Award at the University of Haifa in 1997, Soroptimist International's Woman of the Year Award in 2000, and was named Honored Personality for Absorption in 2003 for her work especially with new-immigrant students from South America.

Menache, who is married and has two children, was selected by the students as one of the top ten teachers of the University (all Faculties included) three times, and over the years was often hailed as the best teacher in the Department of History.

## Students Have an Address for Complaints: Professor Schatzker, Their Ombudsman

**"C**haim Schatzker walks into the room for the interview nattily dressed, suit and tie, a good fit, and not at all stiff. It is a very un-post-modern look for the occasion, but it makes a statement. It demonstrates his respect for the institution and, especially, for its students.

The 76-year-old professor emeritus of history shows his concern for students in still another, more active manner: he is their ombudsman. Their complaints representative, to translate the term from the Hebrew. He considers it a position of honor.

"I enjoyed every day," he says of his teaching career at the University, which began before there was a Mount Carmel campus. "So if I can give something in return, I will do so willingly."

That "something" is acting upon 20-30 complaints a year that reach his office after filtering through the Dean of Students Office. Most grievances have to do with academic matters—"but I do not interfere in grades," he makes it clear—and a minority with tuition and other administrative matters.

"A kind of contract exists between the University and the student," he says, half figuratively

and half alluding to the ISO convention in regard to student services that the University administration has uniquely issued. "If something goes awry, if the contract is not filled, then the student has an address where to turn.

"I relate equally to all student matters. It could have to do with a classroom matter, such as not stating the course requirements in the first class meeting as each lecturer is required to do, or a student's feeling insulted or humiliated in class, or a professor's making unfair or unequal demands. Or it could have to do with a parking space or the clarification of an item."

When the complaint reaches his office, Schatzker first checks it out, then invites the complainant for a talk. He does not want any student to feel deprived.

"Students should feel that someone is listening to them," he says. "This is not an obtuse University."

If he finds the student's complaint legitimate, he writes to the department chairperson, who must according to University regulations provide a response. If the answer is evasive, he will go to the academic officer. If there is no satisfaction, he will write his verdict and submit it either to the

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**Prof. Menachem Mor**  
Dean of Humanities

**T**he new Dean of the Faculty of Humanities is Assoc. Prof. Menachem Mor, a Polish-born, Jewish history scholar. A former Assistant to the Rector, he served as Chairman of the Dept. of Multidisciplinary Studies prior to taking up the new academic administrative post.

Not long after gaining his doctorate from the Hebrew University, Mor began a six-year stint as Holder of the Klutznick Chair in Jewish Civilization at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. He had earned his M.A. at Duke University in North Carolina and B.A., with highest honors, from the University of Haifa.

A specialist in the history of the Second Temple, Mishnaic, and Talmudic periods, Mor has focused in his scores of scholarly articles and books on the peoples that lived in the Land of Israel during these times and on their various sects: Jews, pagans, and Christians. One of his books, for example, deals with *The Samaritans in the Ancient World* (in Hebrew). His expertise centers on the Bar-Kochva Revolt, on which he wrote his first book (in Hebrew), entitled *The Bar-Kochva Revolt—Its Extent and Effect*.

The new dean has been active in the University's academic administration, having served as a member or chairman of a series of councils and committees over the past decade. He also headed the Center of Research of Eretz Israel Studies and Its Yishuv of Yad Ben-Zvi and the University of Haifa. Outside the University, he is a member of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature, as well as a member of the Board of the Journal of Jewish History and a member of the World Organization of Jewish Studies.

Menachem Mor is married and has three children.



**Anat Liberman**  
New External Relations Head

**A** marketing specialist and financial analyst is the new Head of the University's Division of External Relations and Resource Development. Ms. Anat Liberman comes to the Mt. Carmel campus following four years as a member of the U.S. management team of the Israeli multinational flavor and fragrance firm Frutarom.

At Frutarom, a subsidiary of the American ICC Industries, Liberman served as treasurer and financial analyst. She reported directly to the company's management in Israel.

Prior to applying her research and business analysis skills for the multinational firm, Liberman was assistant manager of the First International Bank of Israel's central district. She had previously served as marketing manager of Fibi's central Tel Aviv branch. In her ten years with the bank, she coordinated marketing activities and helped prepare strategies for recruiting both commercial and private customers, resulting in an expansion of the bank's credit business and a rise in its customer base by over a third.

A native of Tel Aviv, Liberman, 42, holds an MBA from Manchester University and earned her B.A., in economics and social sciences, at the Hebrew University.

The University's new PR head is married and has three children.

## Virtual Open House Proves a Big Hit

**H**its came from Belgium, Russia, China, and quite surprisingly Iran, along with the thousands from Israel. The occasion was the first virtual open house for an Israeli university.

Conducted as a synchronous Website by the University this past April, the open house allowed visitors to click on a virtual tour of the campus, ask a department head a question and receive an answer within a few minutes, chat in any of several forums devoted to specific topics, and hear video talks by the University's President, Rector, and Dean of Students. The options available enabled the virtual visitor to learn more about requirements and student life than was possible during the physical open houses conducted in the past.

The response was so good that the University has left the site on the Web: <http://24hours.haifa.ac.il/>

"There was feeling of doing something pioneering, so there was pride in what we accomplished," said Dr. Tamar Almog, Head of the University's Unit for E-Learning, who conceived of the innovative open house and took part in its operation.

The accomplishments were both in the appeal and utility of the site, which led to twice as many applicants to the University compared to a regular day, and in the upgrading of the University's "virtual look." The University's engineering-oriented sister institution down the road, the Technion, even inquired about the workings of the site. Yoram, a commercial international site, expressed enthusiasm, as well as a desire for a link to the open-house site. The University's Computing Division was responsible for the successful technology.

Deputy Rector Prof. David Faraggi, a statistician, kept track of the statistics. The most popular forum had to do with the general B.A. degree. The forums, as Almog explained, were filtered, but no chat was deleted so far as she knows. The questions and answers posted on the various forums, she added, remain on the site, as they can be assembled to serve as FAQ (frequently asked questions) for future "visitors."

The most active hour of the day for forums was between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. The Faculties of Law and Social Sciences received the most inquiries. The most visitors online at the same time numbered

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University's 24-hour forum/information site

## Computer Science and Occupational Therapy Team Up for Virtual Reality Conference

# Student Develops Innovative Technology to Deal with Post-Traumatic Stress

## A Dog Is also a Hit at Conference on Rehabilitation Technologies



Virtual reality helmet puts trauma victims back into the picture.

Passengers who have undergone the horror and pain of a bus bombing on an Israeli road. American soldiers who have experienced the shelling or road-side attack of their humvee in Iraq. Survivors pulled out from under the ruins of a building following an earthquake. In each case, the victim may be severely scarred by trauma if not by physical injury, as well.

The use of virtual reality to deal with the effects of trauma caused by such events provided one focus of an international conference and exhibition held at the University in early March. The conference, "Virtual Reality, Associated Technologies, and Rehabilitation," brought to the Mt. Carmel campus some of the leading researchers in the fields of occupational therapy and computer simulation from the United States, Canada, England, Spain, Italy, and Japan, as well as Israel.

Sponsors of the three-day gathering, which featured both talks and a showcase of technologies, were the University's Rothschild Institute for Interdisciplinary Applications of Computer Science and the Dept. of Occupational Therapy, in conjunction with the U.S.-Israel Science and Technology Foundation.

The University's Prof. Tamar Weiss and Dr. Naomi Josman described a virtual reality program for dealing with trauma victims of terrorist attacks. The simulation brings the traumatized individuals back to

the scene of the incident to deal with their fears. The VR program is already in use.

The showcase involved a display of this innovative technology for treating severe post-traumatic stress disorder. The effect on the patient of recreating a terrorist incident through virtual reality is the subject of a Master's degree thesis being written by a student in the Department of Occupational Therapy. The technology itself, involving a helmet that puts the patient into the virtual scene, was developed in Seattle.

However, the university, through its Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology, which Weiss heads, is making the first use of it in Israel for both research and treatment, according to Josman. She is the graduate student's thesis adviser and conceived of the VR helmet's adaptation to an Israeli virtual environment.

The graphic display of an exploding bus—a too common reality in Israel—is harrowing enough to watch on the television screen. The emotional effect of being put into the scene even virtually is more severe. But, says Josman, who chairs the Dept. of Occupational Therapy, it is necessary for the patient's eventual recovery from post-traumatic stress. For that reason, too, a clinical psychologist who teaches at the University accompanies the sessions administered by the occupational therapy student.

It was a little black dog of Japanese-Canadian pedigree that almost stole the show at the showcase.

The dog's "trainer" is Dr. Ehud Sharlyn, assistant professor of computer science at the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada, who has been programming for various human-robot interactions. Though you would never know it from the way university students and even professors were petting it and calling on this fido to sit up, Aibo, the dog, is actually a robot.

Sharlyn, who conducts his research in Calgary's Interactions Laboratory, and his students have been programming Aibo, originally developed by Japan's Sony corporation, to behave like a "very cute dog, playing with its bone and being friendly to people," as he put it. Its official moniker is Aibo ERS-7M2.

Though an expensive toy, costing some \$2,000, Aibo can be used in rehabilitation, according to the Israeli-born Canadian scientist. His goal has been to "elicit human emotions and responses from a playful and fearful dog." People in need of rehabilitation, he explained, may perceive these synthetic emotions as though they elicited them. He cited autistic children and the lonely aged as two categories of people who could possibly benefit from the interaction. This dog, as he pointed out to onlookers at the showcase, makes no demands.

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## Giora Lehavi:

# His Job Is to Check on Quality Management, and Other Standards

Can social responsibility be standardized? The University thinks so, and University President Aaron Ben Ze'ev and Board of Governors member Ziva Patir, who is director-general of the Israel Standards Institute, have been involved with an international committee in advancing an international standard on the matter.

Whether or not social responsibility, which is high on the University's agenda, alongside research and teaching, eventually becomes a standard, the exercise of this feature necessarily involves outreach to the community. The University is in fact at the stage of implementing two already existing international standards, each of which also has an orientation to the community: one is OHSAS 18001—occupational health and safety management systems; the other is ISO 14001—environmental management systems.

If the University makes a commitment to be certified for these two standards as it did for the prestigious quality management standard ISO 9000, the person who will likely oversee their implementation on campus is Giora Lehavi, head of the University's Quality Management Unit.

Lehavi, who took up the newly created administrative position in October 2003, supervises a total of 22 University administrative units, including academic administrations, that received individual certifications from the Israeli Standards Organization attesting to their quality management and functioning. In September 2004, the University as a whole was certified as meeting the international standard of quality management. The University of Haifa is the only Israeli university, and one of the few in the world, to gain this distinction.

Focus talked with Lehavi about the role of the youngest administrative unit at the University.

His guiding principle is that the University is "in the final analysis, a service organization." That means, "it must strive to improve services to the consumer—mainly the student—all the time." Competition among the Israeli universities, but especially between the universities and the growing number of colleges demand this improvement, he continued. In addition, the students are more demanding than in the past.

"It is impossible to provide the services without an orderly system that can supervise it and propel it forward," he stated.

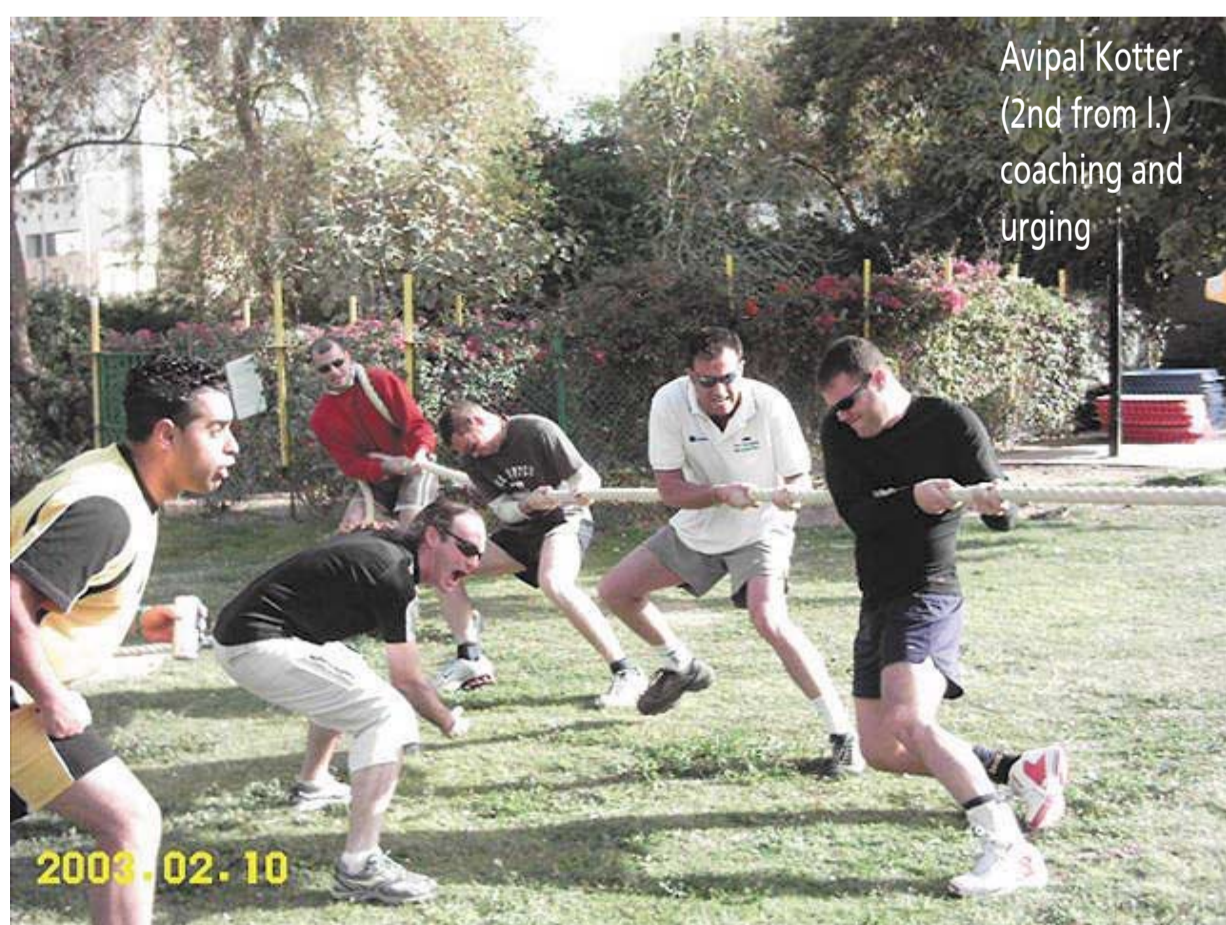
The Quality Management Unit, Lehavi explained, helps the different units to maintain a quality system by writing rules in cooperation with his unit. It tested the practical application of these rules and then reviewed and encouraged each unit going through the process of their implementation.

Units that receive certification go through an internal auditing

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## University's Sports Teams

# Prove a Winner in More Ways than One



Avipal Kotter (2nd from l.) coaching and urging

good light. It did good service for Israel."

Although Kotter didn't say so, it probably helped, too, that the University of Haifa team placed high in the tournament.

Sports are not the thing at Israeli universities as they are at American colleges. It would, in fact, probably come as a surprise to faculty and staff alike, if not many of the students, as well, that the University offers 22 different sports teams. Not every team is fielded every year, since not every sport can attract a sufficient number of varsity players each time.

In one unusual twist, there is a team, but no facility of its own to practice or play. "We must be in the Guinness Book of Records for having the only water polo team that has no pool," Kotter laughed.

There are no leagues as such. The Academic Sports Association (ASA) is the Israeli equivalent of the U.S.'s NCAA. Most games take place in ASA tournaments, such

as a four-day winter meet in Eilat.

This past winter, a 6-man University of Haifa team competing in a series of 7 different sports—from tug-of-war, weight lifting, and wall climbing, to paddle-boating, and others—placed second in the competition.

In other ASA competitions, the women's mini-soccer team claimed the championship for 2005, and the men's navigating team came in second in that sport. The men's mini-soccer team also placed second in the ASA championships.

Although "there is not a sports culture here," as Kotter put it, "the University of Haifa does offer modest scholarships to outstanding sportsmen and women. No recruiting for sports teams goes on here at the University or in Israel, he states. He backtracks from this assertion somewhat, noting parenthetically that some of the newer private colleges around the country have begun to recruit players. In the U.S., he says by way of comparison, colleges constitute the route on the way to the pros. Here [at the University and in Israel] it's almost the other way.

The scholarships that the University awards are for

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## Nobel Laureate Kahneman at Haifa University: 'Nothing Is as Important as You Think'

"Nothing in life is quite as important as you think it is when you think about it."

Prof. Daniel Kahneman, the Israeli-American 2002 Nobel Laureate in Economics who is a psychologist, gave this prescription at a talk here in April.

The occasion was the publication of Kahneman's new book, in Hebrew, entitled (in translation) *Rationality, Fairness, Happiness*, by Haifa University Press. The book's chapters were "carefully chosen in concert with Prof. Maya Bar-Hillel of the Hebrew University to reflect Kahneman's premiere contributions to behavioral science," according to Editor-in-Chief of the Press, Moshe Zeidner.

Economists, Kahnemann said, are puzzled by the fact that people want more money but don't achieve more happiness when they get it. The standard of living has grown tremendously since World War II, he continued. But there has been no great rise in satisfaction with life. He calls this phenomenon the "hedonist treadmill."

He accounts for this by another puzzle. This is the surprising finding that life's circumstances have less effect than expected. The psychologist gave the example of a study of paraplegics' attitude toward life. There was very little difference between theirs and that of other people. When the paraplegic or a paralyzed person moves from thinking about him or herself first to paying attention to other things, he said, then that person starts to live a different life. Only one focus is dominant, he claims.

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"They were playing together for a common purpose, Jews and Arabs." Avipal Kotter, assistant director of the University's Physical Education Unit, was describing a recent college tournament in Europe in which the University's soccer team took part.

"Some of the other teams, especially from France and Spain,

wondered how Jews and Arabs could not only play on the same side, but share the same room," he continued. "They saw how the teams from Algeria and Lebanon were hostile to the Israelis. They thought that Jews and Arabs only fought. And here was our team, 30 percent Arabs. It changed perceptions. It was a shock to the French and others. It showed the University in a

# Honors & Awards

**Prof. Tamar Katriel** of the Dept. of Communication and Faculty of Education was invited to speak at a plenary session of the annual meeting of the International Communication Association in New York. The organization is the premier scholarly body in the discipline. The session will explore Dialogue in Cross-Cultural Perspective, on which topic Katriel recently published a book.

**Dr. Hannah Safran** of the Women's Studies cluster in the Dept. of Multidisciplinary Studies was presented the Israeli Civil Rights Association's Emil Grunzweig Human Rights Award for her wide-ranging activity to advance the status of women, to preserve their rights, and to advance human rights in general on the basis of justice and equality. Among Safran's illustrious predecessors who received this award was Prof. Itzhak Zamir, the founding Dean of the University's Law Faculty.

**Prof. Gabriel Weimann**, Dept. of Communication, was "conscripted" by the prestigious, Washington, DC-based Rand Corporation to join a special research team that will deal with the influence of extremist propaganda. The team consists of ten of the world's most foremost researchers in the fields of terrorism, Islam, communication, and social psychology.

**Prof. Tamar Weiss**, Head of the Laboratory for Innovations in Rehabilitation Technology in the Dept. of Occupational Therapy, was welcomed into the American Occupational Therapy Foundation's Academy of Research, the highest scholarly honor that AOTF confers, for her work in "helping persons with disabilities participate in the occupations of their choice while improving the quality of their lives." She is only the second Israeli scholar to have been invited into the elite body.

**Assoc. Prof. Yechiam Weitz** of the Dept. of Land of Israel Studies was awarded two prizes for his research. One was the Menachem Begin Memorial Prize for his book on the forerunner of the present-day Likud Party, *First Steps Toward the Premiership—The Herut Movement, 1949-1955*; the second was the Yad Yitzhak Ben-Zvi Prize, given for his previous book on the Revisionist Movement and Begin himself, *From Underground Fighting to Political Party—The Establishment of the Herut Movement, 1947-1949*.

**Dr. Haggai Kupermintz**, Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, received the American Educational Research Association's, prestigious Palmer O. Johnson Memorial Award. The award, according to AERA, "represents the highest quality of academic scholarship." He and a University of Colorado colleague received the honor at the organization's 86th annual meeting, held in Montreal, in April for their joint work on "Rethinking Expert Testimony in Education Rights Litigation."

**Dr. Sari Goldstein-Ferber**, a clinical psychologist and Lecturer in the Faculty of Social Welfare and Health Studies, received the Center for Special Studies' Inbar Fund prize for her research, "A Cognitive and Organizational Analysis of al-Qaeda: The Contribution of a Psychological Perspective to the Understanding of Global Terrorism." She was one of four Inbar Fund prize recipients this year, two of whom were from the University.

**Ms. Meirav Manor-Goren**, who received her M.A. from the Dept. of Education, was the second Inbar Fund prize recipient with a University of Haifa connection this year. She received the prize for her thesis, "Psychological Distress among Youth at the Outbreak of the Second Intifada, Coping, and Receiving Assistance from Support and Information Groups."

**Prof. Moshe Zeidner**, Dean of Research, was named a member of the Editorial Board of *Emotion*, the premiere journal in the field of Affective Sciences, published by the American Psychological Association.

**Dr. Fania Oz-Salzberger**, a sociologist who heads the Law Faculty's Posen Forum, was invited to take part in the 2006 Tanner Lectures at Princeton University's Center for Human Values, considered one of the most prestigious academic events in the U.S.

**Assoc. Prof. Raphael Cohen-Almagor**, who chairs the Information Sciences and Librarianship program, was named a Bogliasco Foundation (Italy) Fellow for Fall 2005; one of the most competitive awards in the field, it is considered the European counterpart of the Rockefeller Foundation grants in the U.S.

**The Department of Philosophy** was ranked 63rd in the world. At first glance, this may not seem fit for inclusion in this Honors List. Consider the circumstances, however: More than 700 graduate departments of philosophy around the world were surveyed for ranking. The University's department came in first in Israel, the next rated Israeli institution ranking 132. The rating was based on the quality and quantity of publications, learned papers, chapters in books, and books by the faculty of every department surveyed.

Though not exactly a prize, the reprint request that **Assoc. Prof. Leon Blaustein** of the Institute of Evolution received certainly made him feel honored. It was from an Iraqi scientist. Blaustein, who is editor of the *Israel Journal of Zoology*, wondered whether this represented a change in Iraq or a failure to take close note of his email address.

## Ambassador MacDonald Outlines Britain's and Europe's Future Relations with Israel



Photo: UK Ambassador to Israel Simon MacDonald (r.) met with University Rector Prof. Yossi Ben-Artzi before airing his views to students and faculty.

**S**imon MacDonald, Britain's ambassador to Israel, believes the UK will play more and more of a bridging role between Europe and Israel. The ambassador outlined his views at a talk here in March, his first to the University's students and staff since becoming ambassador a year and a half ago. His visit was sponsored by the Law Faculty's Posen Forum.

Describing UK-Israel relations as good, "starting at the top," he said, "If Blair gets a 3rd administration, he will be happy to be a bridge."

"There is evidence of this, such as the government's revised attitude toward Hizbolla in the European Union," MacDonald continued, explaining that the policy was no longer to resist separating the organization's

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Lavi Sigman (r.) and his father Arie review a text together.

## Student Publishes His Road to Wisdom

**C**asually sitting next to a window overlooking the lush Carmel region, 26-year-old Lavi Sigman smiles. He had recently sent a copy of his book to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. Sigman, who will graduate with a dual degree in Law and Psychology in June, co-authored the Hebrew-language work *Shanghai Diamonds and the Road to Wisdom* (יהלומי שנגח'י והדרך לתבונה, available from Hashchaf Publishers) with his father, Arie.

Although a big accomplishment, this is not the first time Lavi has been involved in a book as an undergraduate. In 2001, Lavi edited his father's volume that had culminated Arie's seven years of social science and medicine research.

A Haifa native who spent three years serving in an IDF intelligence unit before beginning his studies, Lavi talked to Focus about his book, the important things in life, and

the reason he doesn't like to watch television.

**Focus:** What is *Shanghai Diamonds and the Road to Wisdom* about?

**LS:** The book reflects on the life of each and every one of us. It's a book that combines my naïve and modern point of view and my father's life experience and research. The plot begins in an ancient city and describes the story of young Williar and old Loroshphos, friends who cross the world in a journey filled with adventures in order to take the treasured *Shanghai Diamonds*. On their path, they learn about justice, respect, war, friendship, love, "good and bad," and about will. They also learn about emotion, how to fulfill the most important desires in life and how to break the walls that surround us. The book describes a unique perspective on society's status today through a story. It is both an allegory of modern life and a tool kit to cope with the stress and difficulties that emerge in everyday life.

**Focus:** Why did you write this book?

**LS:** The book resulted from my urge to write about things that bother me, and it combines with my father's urge to let people see there is a possibility for change at the social and personal level. What made us come together is my desire to help people by bringing them to a new perspective about life—one that shows you another way of coping with situations and a way to do things without being self-centered.

**Focus:** How did your life experience shape the book?

**LS:** As a young Israeli, I grew up in a reality that is characterized by many problems teenagers and people in other countries haven't coped with. This is what made me see a lot of people in bitter need of help; that's what drove me to do this book about giving and other things lacking or deteriorating in Israeli society.

**Focus:** What is the most important thing people should take from this book?

**LS:** The book is supposed to help people take a better perspective of life. It's a tool that helps you to deal with things that make you feel bad. But it's not a happiness crème; you don't put it

on your head and become happy—you need to work and observe yourself. People are responsible for finding a way to join forces and explore their intellectual resources to change what is wrong about the world. The book is supposed to be the infrastructure that you build for yourself in order to make you feel better. I think the book gives you the perspective to see your life as what you made of it and the present as the best time to make a change. What's more important is that we had a message in the book of not only doing for yourself but also doing for others.

**Focus:** Has the book changed your life?

**LS:** I think the book is more than a way of thinking; it's a way of life. It reflects in my life, in our life, that the most important thing is, not just talking/writing about changing the world, but to change the world. Two weeks ago, my father and I donated 50 books to different charities. Also, my father runs courses free of charge for people who need help dealing with problems in their lives. That is what it is all about—doing and not just speaking about a perspective on life. Doing things that you believe in is a way of life.

**Focus:** Is there anything distinctly Jewish about the book?

**LS:** I think that there are numerous things Jewish about it; what is unique is the connection between Jewish spirit and mitzvot (good deeds). Mitzvot are something you give from yourself and then give to others, along with self-observation and not being self-centered. Doing for the benefit of society, your family, and yourself is something that emerges from the book and from the principles of Judaism.

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## SAHAR



Prof. Azy Barak

operating.

Every day, hundreds, perhaps even thousands of people, says Barak, access the site ([www.sahar.org.il](http://www.sahar.org.il)), which at this stage is Hebrew-speaking only. The site is rich in content, providing information about a range of distressful conditions, as well as the names and addresses of therapists and clinics where help is available and whether the service involves a fee. There are group forums and individual chat sessions with well-trained helpers. There are also links to other relevant sites. The Sahar site itself, Barak stressed, is always updated and completely free of charge to users.

Whether they use the form published on the site or merely write in through their own email, 10-50 people a day, ranging in age from youngsters just ten or twelve years old to senior citizens, write e-mails to Sahar. Some just want to share their story, their pain, he said. Some are actively seeking help, an answer to deal with problems ranging from eating disorders to sexual assault to contemplating suicide.

In addition, Sahar goes live every night from 9 p.m. to 12 midnight. An average of 25 Internet users a night access its synchronous, real-time chat opportunity with a paraprofessional helper. Some are doing so for the first and only time, others are repeat "callers." These individual chats, which

Barak makes clear are not intended for one-on-one therapeutic dependence, gives callers an opportunity to "pour their hearts out, to spill their guts" and to receive a sympathetic response in return.

"People will relate things on the Internet they would not otherwise share," the psychologist comments. "Not on a one-to-one basis in person and not even on the phone. So you get to know what the person intends."

Those who chat with a helper, just like those who send emails or access the site in general, remain anonymous. Barak, who has written extensively on the subject, holds this feature to be one of the advantages of on-line counseling. Nevertheless, he has an arrangement with the police. If the helper perceives an immediate threat, the "caller's" location and, if possible, identity are ascertained, and the police are notified to try to save the person. He could recall only one case of not being able to find a would-be suicide's location (since the person connected to the Net through a computer class); in all the other hundreds of cases, emergency rescue teams located and approached the person-at-risk on time.

Four online support groups are also maintained and monitored: for children, adults, soldiers, and for those who want to express themselves creatively through poems, stories, etc. As with forums in general, users enter and leave the Sahar support-groups at will, sometimes several times a day, but about two hundred new messages come in every day.

Each day brings its share of shocking stories, Barak relates. "People with nowhere to go, looking for a shoulder to cry on." Most of the "people" are youths. "Youths—those up to age 21—comprise 70 percent of referrals to Sahar," he replies when asked who enters the site to chat. "They have no money for therapists and are dependent on their parents, most of whom don't know or

don't want to know about their child's distress. Besides," he notes, "youth are more attuned to the Internet."

Barak is firmly convinced that if Sahar closes down, there will be more mental deterioration among Israeli youth, more severely distressed kids, more school dropouts, and more suicides in this age group. "Our success speaks for itself," he states, pointing to proven successful intervention in more than one hundred incidents of forestalling a suicide, at times when the despondent individual held a gun or stood on a high balcony. Sahar has been instrumental, too, in preventing hundreds of more cases from deteriorating to a life-threatening situation.

A counseling psychologist who gained his doctorate in the field from Ohio State University, Barak believes that people who talk about suicide want to speak about their distress to someone, but don't know where to turn or think that others don't want to hear. Sahar offers an outlet to speak and to be heard, and Israelis in general, he says, are not afraid to speak.

Americans, in contrast, do not open up as readily, in Barak's opinion. This is one reason that a vital support site like Sahar has not taken root in the United States. Perhaps a more powerful deterrent has to do with the legal implications of such a site. In the U.S., he says, people are more afraid of the legal implications of giving advice to an anonymous caller. They fear being sued if the person seeking help has a dangerous condition that is not revealed and, consequently, receives improper advice. They even fear being sued for not helping a person out of a distressful situation.

"So far," he smiles, "no one has complained or sued. Just the opposite."

The paraprofessional helpers who lend an ear to the shocking stories they receive every day and provide a virtual shoulder on which to cry come from all walks of life. There are teachers,

students, computer programmers, nurses, and people from other vocations. All are volunteers and share certain common denominators: maturity, an empathetic nature, and most importantly a desire to help.

Volunteer psychologists, psychiatrists, and other mental-health professionals—Sahar has only one paid employee, a manager—monitor these helpers in terms of supervision, guidance, and emotional support. Barak, who also volunteers his services, oversees the running of the program and the training of the paraprofessionals, who must first go through an intensive training program before being allowed to lend that shoulder. In response to ads placed twice a year, about 150 persons apply to be helpers, but a weeding out process leaves an average of 15 to undergo training. Half of these usually drop out. Then there is a kind of internship period. The entire process lasts half a year.

He would like to train a replacement. He would also like to have Russian and Arabic-speaking psychologists and paraprofessionals, as well as computer programmers in these languages to prepare software programs. It's all a matter of money, which was the reason for his initial skepticism that he could implement the idea of providing mental support through the Internet to those in distress and to keep it running. Relying on donations, including "a little donation" from the Ministry of Health, for the NIS 500,000 annual budget (approx. \$100,000) takes out too much of his time, Barak complains.

As it is, the amount of work and time, he puts into Sahar professionally cuts into the time available for his research. Why does he do it and why does he feel it should continue and develop? "Sahar constitutes an implementation of my academic work and research," he states. "It is for the community's welfare. It is my contribution to people who have no where else to turn."

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## Kidma Project

of backgrounds, including Christian, Muslim, and Druze Arabs, American Jews, and Israeli Jews from the FSU and Ethiopia. Each woman had to be interviewed prior to being accepted into the course, which earns them four academic credit points upon completion. The topics covered include streams of feminism and the role of women in times of social change, peace organizations, and militarism. A variety of guests are invited to speak about their role as activists for feminist organizations.

The course is organized around a feminist model. Dalia Halabi, the Israeli Arab facilitator, explains, "In most conflicts there is a patriarchal point of view. We are trying to use a different dialogue based on feminist pedagogy and critical theory to encourage dialogue based on empathy, listening, and acceptance even if I disagree with you."

"If you look in the newspaper, you see only males who are negotiating. They bring their agenda. A big contribution of feminist theory is to help conflict resolution...we are trying to combine the two at the civil society level."

Because the focus of the course is on identity, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is frequently discussed. As a result, Dalia states, "There are a lot of hard moments. This is a difficult issue to speak about. But we don't try to diminish things or hide; rather, we emphasize the issue of power relations."

"I don't always enjoy class—sometimes it evokes feelings of anger and pain. I want to shout and say it's not fair," said Mayce, a 22-year-old Druze student from the Golan. Sophia, a pseudonym for a 21-year-old Arabic-speaking student who asked to remain anonymous, describes her frustration over the two-sided issue. "It is very hard because there is no solution to the conflict...I'm an outside watcher. I attack the Jews when I have to and the Arabs when I have to."

All the women interviewed cited the difficulty of explaining their identity in the framework of gender and nationality. "If I don't identify myself enough, someone in the course does it for me...I feel Israeli and that I have an influence from everything here," affirms Irit, a 25-year-old Jewish student. On the other side of the spectrum, Mayce explains, "I don't feel a part of this country. I've never been in Syria, but I don't belong to Israel...I'm just here." Sophia finds herself somewhere in the middle; "After taking a course on national identity last year, I saw myself as an Israeli because I live in this country...but in my heart I am with the Palestinians."

Often the variety of viewpoints represented in the course lead to heated debate. After watching *Children of Arna*, a film that depicts how Palestinian children from a theater group became involved in the Intifada, the reactions were extremely volatile. The participants' sensitivity to the subject matter was clear after one participant left the room in anger. In the dialogue that ensued, the women anxiously described their feelings toward the film. "Angry," "frustrated," and "confused" were the most popular emotions.

The facilitators see these feelings as normal at the mid-way point of the course. "I would like to see them as a group to work together, but they have to go through the battle," Tali comments. "This is the reality. They have to handle the situation. If they don't talk about the difficult things, how will change happen?"

Tali's co-facilitator, Dalia, agrees. "When you meet the other, you meet yourself...you confront things in you that you don't want to see...If I first see who I am and accept myself—the weaknesses, prejudices, and stereotypes inside me—this will bring a better understanding of the other."

To have a better understanding of "the other" was the most common response when participants were asked why they chose to take the course. Irit, a Middle East History major, wanted to gain a greater understanding of Arabic culture, as well as to explore work in a feminist organization. Mayce, who is studying English literature, was also interested in feminism but sought to understand the Jewish viewpoint after completing a previous Kidma course only for Arab women.

Mollie, a 21-year-old American student in the University's Overseas Studies Program, thought the course would be a "sound box for different opinions." A Political Communication major, Mollie got her wish. "Although there is a huge conflict when people express their opinions in class, it is amazing to be expressing and hearing different opinions," she says. "So many times people stick to their cultural groups and guess what the other side is thinking. It's nice to actually hear the other side."

Dalia believes that "as a whole, all the participants in this course won't leave the same. All the questions they ask and what they think about a matter is not what they came with. I believe that awareness isn't something easy to have."

Tali adds, "If they go home and don't think about doing anything inside, this is a failure. But a success is to see them getting angry and talking after each lesson...You can see and hear the emotion. I believe in the hard process. If everyone had the solution, it would be different."

Claudia Goodich-Avram, Kidma's program coordinator, cites the lack of women in the decision-making process of politics as a large problem. Her hope is that the students involved in Kidma's courses will become volunteers or activists in a feminist organization. "The main outcome is to see what they can do, as a way of raising consciousness from the feminine perspective and also trying to resolve conflict," Claudia stated.

Kidma has been working for the past twenty years to advance the status and improve the lives of all women in Israel. It offers a variety of courses, seminars, and workshops to increase women's access to the academic and institutional tools needed to improve their lives. A financially independent institution within the university, Kidma depends on outside support to continue strengthening women's rights in Israel. —M.-A.F.

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## Nobel Laureate

Economists and others, he commented, often do not take into consideration this basic adaptation that people make, and so they arrive at wrong judgments. The paraplegic

does not have to be an unhappy person.

The Nobel Laureate finds a close relationship between errors in judgment and level of attention to things, on the one hand, and the degree of well-being that a person attains, on the other hand.

Kahneman actually prefers the term "well-being" rather than "happiness" as the translation of the Hebrew *osher* in the book's title.

The Princeton professor told his Haifa University audience that since high school he had wondered why people were so sure about

what they said when they were so often wrong. What made people indignant? What makes them, for example, forgive some things but not others. He was still analyzing the complexity of people, he said.

## Students Have an Address continued from page 1



Prof. Chaim Schatzker

rector or directly to the president. "The lecturers have learned they can't fool around with me," he comments.

The ombudsman's ability to act freely, not subject to any unit head, and also to appeal right to the University rector or president is the element that gives the office some teeth.

"The students are very thankful," Schatzker remarks, "even when I can't help. For they see that the matter is being handled." He says, almost as an aside, that the Student Union has praised him, quickly adding that he has no direct connection with the students' organization. Nor does he publicize his successful mediations.

He rarely hurries to hand in a verdict, since his aim is obtain mutual understanding. If he detects a serious clash of personalities between teacher and student, he may try, for example, to persuade the student to have someone else administer the test.

Exam time brings with it the biggest rush of complaints. Two

exams may be scheduled on the same day or a lecturer does not allow a student doing army reserve duty to take advantage of exam period B or the exam may contain material not covered in class.

Although this ombudsman was once instrumental in ousting a lecturer whose behavior he described as "an absolute monarch," he reiterates that he is not an advocate of the students. "I only a priori listen to them." He also notes that he doesn't have the tools to investigate a student's character, nor does he wish to. Even with his freedom of action, he also doesn't do what might be termed "class action" complaints. For that, some departments and Faculties have their own grievance committees.

Schatzker, who continues to research and publish—he just finished an article on "skinheads" and has embarked on a new project researching how German school textbooks deals with present-day anti-Semitism—explains that the office of University ombudsman always goes to a retiree—"What can they do to me?"—and has never gone to someone from the Law Faculty. He also feels it shouldn't. He stresses, though, that "my judgments are according to the University's constitution and regulations."

Four years on the job of listening to and acting on students' complaints has not in the least lessened Chaim Schatzker's declared attachment to the institution that in 2002 awarded him its "University Award of Merit."

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## Giora Lehavi:



of their procedures twice a year. He stressed that the regulations come not from above but from the employees themselves, noting that there is no rule that interferes with a worker. For that reason, he prefers the term “work as a logical process” rather than work rules. The process can change, he points out, if workers advance new ideas that facilitate the work.

In his view, ISO has made things easier for administrative employees in the academic departments, since each unit

works the same way toward students and toward faculty members.

Lehavi is perhaps especially sensitive toward the way students are treated, since he had spent the previous ten years giving service to them as Head of the University’s Students Administration Division. Prior to that, he had been administrator of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Mathematics (as it was then known). It is not surprising to learn that the man who sees to it now that students receive the services due them earned his B.A. (in Geography and Political Science) here at the University.

His Master’s degree, gained at the University of Sidney in Australia, was in town and country planning. Although he likely never thought about it, that training may make it easier for him to help his alma mater become one of the first organization’s to be certified in the area of social responsibility when and if an international standard is agreed.

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## UK Boycott

the UK to explain its position to AUT representatives;

- initiated a fundraising operation in conjunction with the American Jewish Congress and other organizations in both the United Kingdom and the United States;
- contacted a well-known British attorney, Anthony Julius, to address legal issues.

Anthony Julius, who is an expert in libel laws, has offered to defend the University’s good name. As a strategic adviser and junior counsel to the historian Deborah Lipstadt, he was instrumental in convincing a British court that David Irving was, indeed, a Holocaust denier.

Among other public cases, he represented the late Princess Diana in her divorce.

A letter drafted by Mr. Julius warns the British academic trade union that it may face a libel suit. The letter states that “the AUT has, both by the assistance it gave to the resolution’s sponsors and by its publication of the [boycott] resolution on its website, defamed the University of Haifa. Our client is entitled to seek damages, a retraction, and an undertaking against further publication of the defamation. It reserves its position in this regard.”

In response to a petition brought by members who oppose the action, the AUT was to reconsider its boycott stance in an extraordinary meeting on May 26.

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China Connection

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In the picture, Vice President Baruch Marzan (1st row, 2nd from l.) poses with other U7 Consortium member representatives in Xiamen.

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## Student Develops Innovative Technology



The University’s Spokesperson, Mrs. Nechama Wintman (l.), also got to play with the “dog” after receiving guidelines from Dr. Ehud Sharlyn (r.).

Sharlyn’s former mentor at the University of Osaka in Japan, Prof. Yoshifumi Kitamura, also came to the Mt. Carmel campus. □The Japanese information scientist showed a film of his virtual chopsticks at the rehabilitation showcase. □ He is investigating the changes that the brain undergoes as a person learns how to do some new activity, such as using a tool.

Other conference sessions were devoted to reality and simulation for homeland security response, simulation and sensing for emergency response, training for dealing with the effects of terror, applications of technologies to mental health and to rehabilitation, consciousness and presence, and collaborative interfaces.

□Prof. Albert Rizzo of the University of Southern California discussed the development of a virtual reality therapy for Iraq War veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress. □ The talk by Dr. Russell Shilling of the U.S. Office of Naval Research centered on revolutionizing military medicine with virtual reality and entertainment technologies.

The exhibition displayed, among others, systems for working with autistic children, VR games for improving motor and cognitive performance after a stroke, a system for diagnosing learning difficulties, and a driving simulator for rehabilitation patients.

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## University’s Sports Teams

outstanding achievement on the field or court. But they may even go to non-playing volunteers—a student who out of dedication voluntarily performs all the clerical, technical, and even janitorial work for a team—and roots them on. Varsity players are exempt from the compulsory sports requirement that is incumbent on every B.A. student at the University. In addition, players on teams that have to practice a fair amount of time are given four academic credits by way of compensation.

Students who want to teach sports can do an M.A. program in Physical Education that the Faculty of Education offers in conjunction with the Wingate Institute, Israel’s premier sports institute and college. Students and staff who want to demonstrate their fitness can participate in the annual Spring run in memory of Ilan Shapira or can work out in the University gym, which has recently honored requests to open earlier in the

morning two days a week.

It is Avipal Kotter’s fifth year with the University’s Sports Unit, and he is under no delusion about putting Haifa on a par with any of the U.S. college sports powers. The fact, however, that his teams have even shown the Europeans and even some Arab countries that Israeli Jews and Israeli Arabs can and do cooperate to produce a winner propels University of Haifa sports, in his eyes, into the Big Leagues. “They put the University, and Israel, in a good light,” he says with understated pride.

VARISITY SPORTS AT THE UNIVERSITY soccer, mini-soccer for men, mini-soccer for women, volleyball for women, volley ball for men, basketball for men, basketball for women, handball for men, chess, karate, judo, swimming, water polo, surfing, tennis, table tennis, squash, marksmanship, fencing, navigating, track and field, bicycling.

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## Virtual Open House

155. The forums for each unit, Almog said, “formed a kind of community. Students and potential students even answered one another, not just the deans, department heads, and administrative assistants.”

She evinced the same tone of satisfaction in defining the event as “an internal happening,” explaining that “academic and administrative staff members got to know one another” during pre-open house training sessions on

how to conduct a forum. Many stayed answering questions until late at night on the day of the open house itself; others sent replies from their home computers.

“Even if the University did not recruit a single student,” she continued, “we profited by coming together.” In the event, thousands of registration kits were mailed out in response to requests by potential applicants.

Almog, who holds the professional rank of Senior Teacher in the Education Faculty, conducts a kind of forum for her students in the courses she teaches that

combine education and technology.

She provides her students with a complete class list, so that they can email one another, as well as her. She gives them the option of printing out articles and presentations at home or in their dorm room that have to be read for the course.

The educator noted that the University now offers some 2,000 computer-aided courses at one level or another of technology, from course readings to relevant movies to a limited but growing number of courses devised entirely as online offerings. The last replaces frontal

lectures and enables students to learn by themselves from recorded talks and other, Internet-based audio-visual aids.

The time was ripe, she felt, to offer the public a virtual open house of the University. Surfers and visitors gained an impression not only of the University itself but also of a computer-based courses. Although Almog admits that it is difficult to quantify the success of this pilot venture, as she referred to it, there seems little question of her own satisfaction with the outcome.

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## Student Publishes His Road to Wisdom

Focus: What feedback have you received about the book?

LS: The comments from people are already coming in—letters, e-mail, and phone calls. People say it reminds them of books such as *The Alchemist* or *Le Petit Prince*. Many say that we should translate the book into English and other languages because the themes are universal. People say it filled them with energy or helped with romantic relationships. We are filled with joy to know that the book has the spirit of something larger; it’s a torch of enlightenment that is meant to make the life of the individual and society happier and healthier. The most beautiful thing someone told me was

that the book gave him a method and the energy to change the things that were difficult in his life. This is the most beautiful thing—it’s worth everything.

Focus: Did you receive any negative criticism?

LS: Critics said three main things: the themes may look trivial, it’s naive to think you can change something around you, and the book’s language is too high for common people. Under the circumstances of this modern environment, I don’t think it’s naive or trivial to fight for the values and things you believe in. Also, what came out of us is how the book was written; we didn’t try to make the language better. Many of the people that called us have responded that it is very readable. In Hebrew we would

say, “You eat it as a snack,” meaning you could read the book in a few hours.

Focus: What do you enjoy doing when not writing books?

LS: I enjoy volunteering and I don’t like spending my time on things without value, like resting too much. I like to do things that are active. I don’t enjoy activities such as watching shallow television shows or going to the beach to sunbathe.

Focus: What are your plans after graduation?

LS: I am heading for a Master’s degree in organizational psychology. I have studied patent law and creativity and want to be involved in economic entrepreneurship. I am interested in developing technology that will integrate with social change.

—M.-A.F.

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## Ambassador MacDonald

military from its social or other aspects. A new policy was in fact developing to declare Hizbolla “non-grata” and to freeze its funds.

“This Prime Minister has embraced the idea (of the bridging role) more, as it can work to Britain’s advantage,” the ambassador said. “It is the case that Blair wants to make.” Until recently, he admitted, the UK has resisted the role of a bridge.

Ambassador MacDonald also revealed that Blair and U.S. president George Bush talked privately by videoconferencing every week. “Israel is always mentioned,” he remarked, adding that “the substance (of the prime minister’s and president’s comments in this regard) wouldn’t distress anyone in this room.”

Israelis, he told his audience, are changing their attitudes toward Britain because of an awareness of

the relationship between Blair and Bush. He noted that Blair was the only Western leader to visit Israel three times and had been positively received here each time. He pointed to the 40 percent increase in tourism to Israel from Britain last year as evidence of the improved people-to-people relations between the two countries.

Economically relations were also good, he claimed, citing the \$22 billion in trade between the two. This was part of Israel’s overall trade with the European Union, which was, in fact, Israel’s largest trading partner, he noted.

As for the peace process, there was no particular model of peace being advocated, he said. The details were being left to the parties themselves. The UK’s role, he commented, was to give them confidence to make the difficult

compromises.

He cautioned, however, that the process “will take longer than people hope.” He acknowledged the impatience in international circles, but stressed that the process had to be performance based.

Attempting to be evenhanded, the ambassador said the Palestinians had to decide what it means to take apart the terrorist structure, but that Israel had to dismantle the outposts in the territories and to freeze all building in West Bank settlements. He called Israeli Prime Minister Sharon’s disengagement plan “a courageous contribution.”

Summing up, Ambassador MacDonald said he finds that Israelis are optimistic. “Wherever I go in the country, there is a real feeling that here is a moment of hope.”

# University's China Connection Continues

The University's relationship with China continues to expand. In mid-March, the University's Vice-President for Administration, Mr. Baruch Marzan, went to Xiamen University in Xiamen, Fujian, China, to present an overview of the UH administrative set-up. The occasion was the 1st Building Administrative Capacity Committee Meeting of the Global U7 Consortium, of which the University is a member. The six other members institutions come from the United States, France, South Korea, and this year's host, China.

Marzan gave a slide presentation describing the University apparatus "at a glance" at a session devoted an Introduction to the Administration and Libraries of U7 Institutions. Other sessions of the three-day meeting were devoted to administrative staff training, staff exchanges, improving the administrative process, and exchanging library information.

The global U7 Consortium concentrates its cooperative efforts on three main programs: (1) the development of a joint education system; (2) conducting joint research; and (3) building administrative capacity at member universities.

The Building Administrative Capacity meeting developed a plan to upgrade administrative staff capacity through sharing strategies in formulating long-term development plans. Members also discussed how to assist the administrative staff improve efficiency.

In the picture, Marzan (2nd from l., 1st row) poses with other U7 Consortium member representatives.

## Mother and Son—in utero—Studied Hebrew at University's Summer Ulpan

by Rosalie Armstrong

"You must have lost your head," people said to me. Another woman said, "You know, I wondered about you last year going to Israel, but think of your baby! You just can't be thinking of yourself anymore going to these dangerous places!" Being pregnant, I knew that the summer of 2004 would probably be the last time for a while that I would feel that I could justify traveling to Israel. It is also easier to go while the baby is in utero. Plus I had the very clear goal in mind of being able to know some Hebrew so that I could share this with the baby as he grew.

I had a month of vacation and other leaves that I could take. In such a short time, I was not so naïve as to think that in one summer month I would be able to read the poetry of Bialik. As my husband had had the benefit of an extensive day-school education in Toronto and had grown up in a family of true "Hebrewphiles," I had no concerns that that there would not be someone to help our little son with homework. However, I wanted to be able to have at least a basic understanding of the grammar and some vocabulary. As a convert to Judaism, I naturally did not have exposure to Hebrew grammar as a child. This was to be my chance to learn as much as I could.

While I have always enjoyed language study—having taken on French, Spanish, and Danish—I found Hebrew a bit intimidating because of the different letters and the right-to-left reading. Luckily I had taken a couple of the crash courses in Hebrew reading here in Canada, so I had some confidence that I could learn.

I looked around on the Internet for a place that I could go in the summer that would expand my existing knowledge, be affordable, and that was used to teaching beginners.

As it turns out, the University of Haifa summer Ulpan was just the place! After some helpful communications by e-mail and phone, I was signed up for the summer.

The Ulpan, I came to learn, is a very special place with some very caring and concerned staff. Knowing that I was pregnant, they were sure to place me in a residence room where I would not have to climb a lot of stairs. As the University residence is nestled alongside Mount Carmel, this was an important concern that I could never have anticipated.

After my luggage went lost for a week, and knowing how difficult it is for a pregnant woman to find quick replacement clothing, the thoughtful staff showed up with towels, large t-shirts, their husbands' shirts, and other items to make me comfortable.

The quality of the Ulpan is excellent. Those who wish to study there should be aware that this is no holiday! You are in school for almost

four hours a day, and you have several hours of homework a night. However, if you are serious about doing intensive Hebrew study and leaving Israel after a month knowing a lot more than when you arrived, this is the place for you.

The Ulpan students in my class (Level 2) came from all over Europe and the United States and ranged in age from 16 to at least 65. It was truly amazing to see the number of non-Jews studying the language, and who were doing it for fun or personal interest. It was also very motivational to see the students in the Level 10 course outside on the picnic tables at night having intensive discussions about the latest Israeli novelists or debating a controversial movie or political issues. Therefore this is not only an Ulpan for pregnant beginners!

The Ulpan has a staff of madrichim (or motivational leaders) who lead hiking trips into the Golan and plan many other wonderful outings for people of all interests. I was chomping at the bit on the day the Ulpan left for the overnight hike in the Golan, but when I saw them all come back and heard their stories of crawling through tunnels and swimming rivers, I realized that I (and my doctor!) had been right to limit my physical activity for the sake of the baby. I did take the special group bus tours to Tel Aviv and Jerusalem and had a great time.

And what kind of student was our baby? Well, he was a very keen student, kicking actively in my tummy during class and kicking me from my afternoon nap to encourage me to do my homework in the evening once the heat died down. For such a young student, he certainly was popular with students and staff, who enjoyed watching how much he grew in a month's time!

As a result of this great adventure, we do speak some Hebrew to our son at home. He knows very well that he is a "Tinok," not a mere baby!

Rosalie Armstrong is a former participant in the 2003 Young Diplomatic Leadership Seminar sponsored by the Israeli Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which began her great love affair with Israel. She is currently on maternity leave from the Federal Department of Justice. She is married to Adam Newman. Their son, the ulpan "talmid," Joseph Rachamim Newman, was born on December 3, 2004.



Rosalie and her tinok, Joseph Rachamim

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## Book Column

*Confronting Captivity—Britain and the United States and Their POWs in Nazi Germany*, by Arieh J. Kochavi, University of North Carolina Press, 2005, 384 pp. What was Allied policy toward its own POWs? Offering a behind-the-scenes look at living conditions in Nazi camps, this book traces the actions the British and American governments took, and didn't take, to ensure the safety of their captured soldiers. It argues that ultimately the lives of the POWs were spared more likely because of their race than for any actions their governments took on their behalf. The author is a Professor in and Chair of the Dept. of History.

*The Political Agenda of Organizations*, by Yitzhak Samuel, Transaction Publishers, 2005, 237 pp. This work scrutinizes the political layout of organizations and outlines the variety of political games played in this realm. Analyzing the concepts of social power and social influence, the book shows how managers influence their subordinates and how executives conduct power struggles and political maneuvers to defend their lucrative positions. The author is a Professor in the Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology and Head of the Graduate Program in Applied Organizational Sociology.

*Dialogic Moments—From Soul Talks to Talk Radio in Israeli Culture*, by Tamar Katriel, Wane State University Press, 2004, 464 pp. The book traces the ways in which the utopian vision of communication has played itself out in Israeli society through the 20th century. Analyzing cultural trends in the evolving Israeli cultural conversation of the years, it is a historically situated study of the cultural fluctuations in this society. The work also focuses in general on conceptions of communication and language. The author is a Professor in the Dept. of Communication.

*Work and Organizations in Israel*, ed. by Yitzhak Samuel and Itzhak Harpaz, Transaction Publishers, 2004. The articles in this volume present empirical evidence of the major features and important changes characterizing work organizations and work in Israel society: labor relations, work values, power and control in work organizations, changes in kibbutz work, woman and work, and migrants and minorities in the labor force. The editors are Professors in the Dept. of Sociology; the second-named editor also serves as Head of the Center for the Study of Organizations and Human Resource Management in the Graduate School of Business.

The University of Haifa *Focus* is a Publication of the Division of External Relations and Resource Development.

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Design: Graphic Touch Ltd.

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