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## NEWS & VIEWS

November 14, 2019 | 16 Cheshvan 5780



*Rabbinical students Batya Ellinoy, Giulia Fleishman, and Sara Blumenthal in Israel*

### Balavev: Hebrew College's Reimagined Rabbinical Year-in-Israel Program

On Wednesday afternoons, seven Hebrew College rabbinical students gather at an apartment in the German Colony, a beautiful neighborhood of Jerusalem, to talk, sing, reflect, study Torah and Tefillah, sip tea, munch on olives or chocolate, and support one another on their year-long journey in Israel.

The students are part of Hebrew College's new year-in-Israel program for third-year rabbinical students called *Balevav*, or "In the heart," which reimagines the year-in-Israel experience to better speak to the contemporary realities of Israeli society and the North American rabbinate.

Funded by the San Francisco-based Germanacos Foundation, the program connects students with Israeli teachers, mentors, peers, communities, and organizations so they have the opportunity to develop relationships while abroad and learn about the rich intellectual, spiritual, and cultural creativity of Israeli society. The program also encourages students to take advantage of learning opportunities that are uniquely available to them while living in Israel.

"Our approach to rabbinic education is one that places relational learning at the center," said Hebrew College President Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld. "Our new Israel program enables students to foster meaningful personal relationships with Israel and Israelis, and invites them to see their time in Israel as part of an ongoing spiritual journey in which they are both inheritors and innovators, generous recipients and creative agents in the story of the Jewish people and the process of interpreting Torah for our time."

[Read more](#)



The Beit Midrash is at the nexus of Hebrew College — it is where rabbinical students study together with their *chavruta* partners, engage in communal prayer and celebration, and grow as individuals and leaders. And at its center sits Rabbi Allan Lehmann, surrounded by students asking questions, seeking advice, and listening intensely to their mentor and friend.



Rabbi Lehmann has been co-director of Hebrew College's Beit Midrash, along with Rabbi Shayna Rhodes, Rab`08, for 10 years. A former congregational and Hillel rabbi, Lehmann has been at Hebrew College for 13 years, and also serves as associate dean of the Rabbinical School, teaches several courses, and coordinates the school's spiritual direction program.

Next month, on December 5, Rabbi Lehmann will be honored by Hebrew College at a celebration

marking his 70th birthday and benefiting Rabbinical School scholarships. He turned 70 on October 27.

“Seventy-year-old people often retire, but I have no desire to. I love my work and I love Hebrew College,” he said. “Think about how many people on this planet get to do work that they care about, that they find meaningful, that they find interesting, that they’re drawn to. I have been very, very privileged – to do what I love, and now to be able to work with people who are exploring that as their work for their lives.”

[Read more](#)

To make a gift to the Rabbinical School Scholarship Fund in honor of Rabbi Lehmann, please [visit our website](#) to use our secure online gift form (please choose "rabbinical scholarships") or send a check to Hebrew College. Thank you!



Please help us meet this challenge match! If 180 donors who gave \$0-\$500 last year (July 1, 2018-June 30, 2019) increase their gifts **BY ANY AMOUNT** by Dec. 31, an anonymous donor will donate \$18K to Hebrew College. #chaichallenge

[Give Now](#)



# SIGHTS & SOUNDS



In late October, Ross Levine (left), Executive Director of the Chleck Family Foundation, enjoyed lunch in the Hebrew College sukkah with rabbinical students who receive support from his Foundation's scholarship donation. Levine remarked, "We sought to create an impactful scholarship program in partnership with Hebrew College that would be a dual investment in both the institution itself—which is doing excellent work in educating and training the next generation of rabbis and Jewish community leaders—and the graduate students themselves. We also view the program as an investment in human capital for the Boston-area Jewish community."



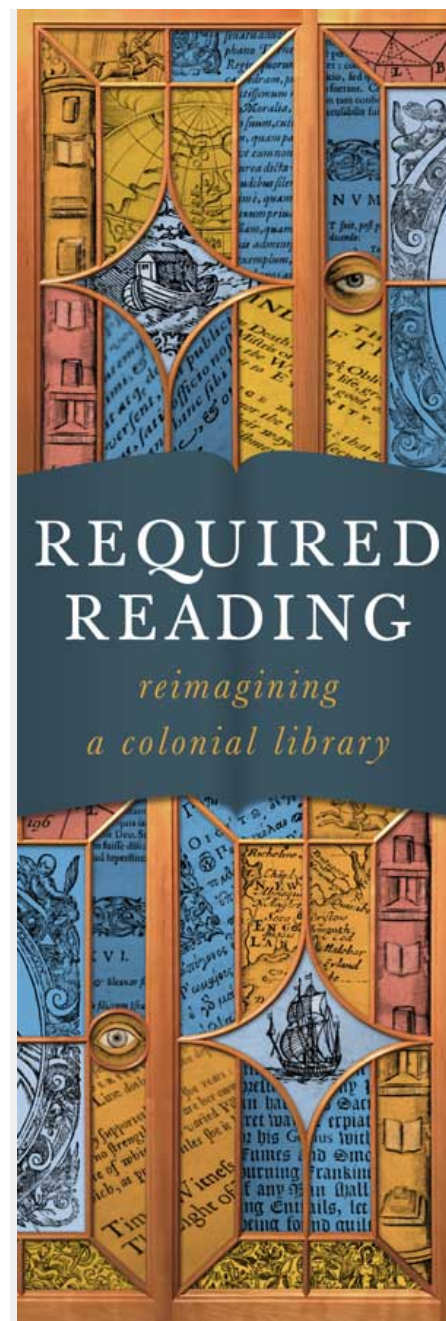
## Hebrew College Featured in Boston Athenaeum's Exhibition *Required Reading: Reimagining a Colonial Library*

Hebrew College's book list is being featured in the [Boston Athenaeum's](#) “Required Reading: Reimagining a Colonial Library” exhibit. Hebrew College was one of 10 Greater Boston community partners to contribute to this exhibit, which tells the story of colonial Bostonians’ quest for “essential knowledge” and invites visitors to reflect on their own “must-read” lists.

Rabbinical School Dean Rabbi Dan Judson reflects here on the books that faculty members selected for Hebrew College's contribution:

“The idea that we had to choose 10 books which reflected Hebrew College initially struck me with some terror. As 'people of the book' how could we possibly narrow down the essence of Hebrew College’s approach to Judaism in just 10 books? A group of faculty ended up hashing out the list with the requisite amount of argumentation and disagreement as to what did and did not belong. Our list includes books that we deemed essential to Judaism like a Tanakh and one volume of Talmud; books that we deemed essential to Jewish history like Theodore Herzl’s *Old-New Land* and *The Diary of Anne Frank*; and books we felt captured the particular Hebrew College vision of Judaism like Aviva Zornberg’s

*The Beginning of Desire*—a brilliant and multifaceted contemporary commentary on Genesis—as well as our own teacher Rabbi Art Green’s theological masterpiece *Radical Judaism*. The process of defining what is essential reading is of course fraught, but there is also a wonderful clarity in seeing the bookshelf in the Athenaeum where these 10 books reside and being able to say this is the essence of who we are and what we believe in.”







## Hebrew College 2019 Educator Conference

Two hundred educators from around New England attended [Hebrew College's 2019 Educator Conference entitled \*Blossoming/Pricha\*](#) on November 11-12, which focused on the blossoming of educators, professionals, students, families, organizations, and the Jewish family. Among the speakers were Avraham Infeld, passionate Jewish educator, leader, and author of the book *A Passion for a People*; Hebrew College Rector Rabbi Arthur Green; and Hebrew College President Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld. (Pictured above left) Rabbi Green, President Anisfeld, and Avraham Infeld; (above right) Rachel Ray, MEd '06, Director of the [Hebrew College's Early Childhood Institute](#).



Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are published weekly in [Patheos](#).

### Resist. Laugh. Hope.

*Parashat Vayera (Genesis 18:1-22:24)*

By Rabbi Jessica Kate Meyer, Rab`14  
Rabbi-Hazzan, [The Kitchen](#)



God walks into the tent of a 99 year-old man, and declares: a year from now, your 90 year-old wife will give birth to a child. The 90 year-old woman, ear pressed against the tent-flap, spontaneously erupts into laughter.

A few scenes later, we read that God remembered, tended to Sarah, and she gave birth to Isaac.

But I want to rewind to that previous scene. A year ago. 90 year-old Sarah eavesdropping. The mysterious visitors reveal to her husband that in a year—despite their advanced years—they will become parents. Sarah loses it. Shakes with laughter. A few moments later, God inquires: why did Sarah laugh? Ashamed, Sarah attempts to deny it: what do you mean? I didn't laugh. לא, כי צחקת. But you did laugh, God replies.

God's question hangs in the air: Why *does* Sarah laugh? What is the quality, the timbre of her laughter? The laconic Torah text leaves it wide open.

If the Talmudic rabbis were to direct the film version of this scene, here's what it would look like: Sarah, bent and bitter, hardened and full of despair at what life has denied her, cranes her neck, to hear the whispering behind the tent flap. Then comes this 'fake news', of a promising future. She laughs. If you could call it that, for in this scenario, it's more like a resentful 'hah' or 'pfff' or even a 'snort.' It's an 'oh please, tell me another one'—a cynical, non-verbal rejection. The Sarah of the Rabbis' film is a dyed-in-the-wool pessimist. Like any good pessimist, she knows the end of the story. And it doesn't end well for her. There is no possibility of joy, and thus her laugh is one of confirmed cynicism, of despair.

Read more

## COMMUNITY LEARNING

### Teen Decision-Making: What I've Learned from Nonprofits

By Shoshi Gordon  
Participant, [Hebrew College Jewish Teen Foundation of Greater Boston](#)

Junior year of high school is not for indecisive people. Everywhere you look, there are so many questions and one choice after another that you need to make.



What colleges are you thinking about? Where do you think you're going to go? When and where are you going to tour? What will be your major? What are you doing over the summer? Is it better to sleep or finish this essay? What are you going to do with your *life*?

But on a completely different note, another question was added to my rushing stream of uncertainty



last spring: Which organizations should I donate to?

When I'm not working on my schoolwork or stressing about my future, I am part of the Jewish Teen Foundation of Greater Boston ([JTfGB](#)), a Jewish teen philanthropy and leadership program. In JTfGB, we work our way through the grant-making cycle and learn about strategic giving and the ins and outs of the nonprofit world. All the teens are broken up into separate boards, meet every month, pick a social cause to focus on for the year, raise money for that chosen issue area and then give grants to organizations of our choosing. Last year, my board's issue area was immigration.

[Read more](#)

## Hebrew College Community Learning Programs Hit Enrollment Milestone!

JTfGB is just one of Hebrew College's many non-credit community learning programs, which together hit record enrollment this fall with 1,300 teens and adult community students of all ages, stages, and backgrounds. With one-third of those courses being taught by Hebrew College faculty and ordination students, we are excited to see our graduate leaders and community learning students enriching each other's Jewish learning experiences.

"We are thrilled to have so many students enrolled in our fall programs, including Me'ah, Open Circle Jewish Learning, Parenting Through a Jewish Lens, Hebrew Language Ulpan, Open Circle Social Action, Prozdor, and JTfGB," said Sara Brown, acting director of Hebrew College Community Learning programs. "Our students are delving into Jewish history and thought, deepening their understanding of Jewish ethics and values, mastering the Hebrew language, and building community and connection in synagogues, community centers, and living rooms throughout Greater Boston."

# EVENTS

## NOVEMBER

**Heidi Urich Annual Lecture on Jewish Genealogy with Saskia Coenen Snyder**  
Free and open to the public

*Diamonds, Jews, and the Expansion of 19th Century Global Trade*

## DECEMBER

**A Night of Learning in Honor of Rabbi Allan Lehmann 70th Birthday**

*Teachers include Rabbi Getzel Davis, Rab`13, Rabbi Art Green, Rabbi Eli Lehmann, Rab`17, and Rabbi Shayna Rhodes, Rab`08. Gifts in Rabbi Lehmann's honor support the Rabbinical*

November 17 | 3:30-5:30 pm  
 Hebrew College  
 Co-sponsored by [Jewish Genealogical Society of Greater Boston](#) and Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#)

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### LimmudFest Boston 2019

November 17 | 9 am- 5:30 pm  
 KI Campus, 384 Harvard St., Brookline, MA  
 Hebrew College is a co-sponsor  
[Learn more & purchase tickets](#)

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**Ta Sh'ma (Come & Hear)**  
**Ordination Programs Open House and Day of Learning**

*The Open House is full. Please [contact us](#) to be added to the wait list.*

November 18 | 8:30 am - 7:30 pm  
 November 19 (optional day to visit classes)  
 Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#)

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**Azamra: Alternative Shabbat Community Minyan**

*With Rabbi Lev Friedman, Rab`18. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#).*

November 23 | 10 am - 12 pm  
 Hebrew College Beit Midrash  
[Learn more](#)

*School Scholarship Fund.*

December 5 | 7-9 pm  
 Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#)

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### Torah Godly Play Training

*Master a torah-telling practice used in religious education designed to enhance the spiritual lives of children.*

December 15 & 16  
 Hebrew College  
[Learn more](#)

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**Jewish Arts Collaborative's Hanukkah at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston**

*Featuring storytelling by Rabbinical School of Hebrew College Dean & Moth Radio winner Rabbi Dan Judson*

Dec. 18 | 4:30 -10 pm | Free  
 Museum of Fine Arts Boston  
 Hebrew College is a co-sponsor  
[Learn more & RSVP](#)

## January 2020: How Will Hebrew Language Classes Look in the Future?

Find out in "Digital Pedagogy of Literacy: The Hebrew Class of the Future" offered by Hebrew College in partnership with Hebrew at the Center (HATC), a non-profit organization dedicated to revolutionizing Hebrew teaching and learning.

In this 8-week online course, explore how the integration of technology in second language instruction using the proficiency approach maximizes the effectiveness of Hebrew classes and

promotes communicative performance of the learner.

Eight one-hour webinars beginning January 27, 2020.  
Download the flyer



Learn more & register



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617.559.8600 | [hebrewcollege.edu](http://hebrewcollege.edu) | [Donate](#)