

The Dr. Paul M. and Trudy Steinberg Distinguished Professorship in Human Relations and Counseling Inaugurated

Dr. William Cutter, Director of the Lee and Irving Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, and Professor of Education and Modern Hebrew Literature, Named the Inaugural Steinberg Distinguished Professor



The Dr. Paul M. and Trudy Steinberg Distinguished Professorship in Human Relations and Counseling has been established through a generous gift from the Irma L. and Abram S. Croll Charitable Trust and its Trustees. The Steinberg Distinguished Professorship honors Dr. Paul M. and Trudy Steinberg, whose association with the College-Institute dates back more than fifty years.

In announcing the establishment of the Steinberg Distinguished Professorship, Rabbi Ellenson said, "We pay tribute to Dr. Paul and Trudy Steinberg for more than fifty years of devotion to the College-Institute, and for Dr. Steinberg's enormous contribution to the College-Institute in his over half-century of administration, teaching, and mentorship of generations of students now serving the Reform Movement and the Jewish community worldwide. We are grateful to the trustees of the Irma L. and Abram S. Croll Charitable Trust, for their generosity, which has made this Chair possible. It is especially appropriate that this Chair honors the visionary research, scholarship, and teaching of Dr. William Cutter, founder of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education and the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles. Dr. Cutter has been a force for innovation, training, and new research in the areas of Hebrew literature, Jewish education, chaplaincy and pastoral counseling, and public policy and education on the relationship between religion and healing."

Rabbi, teacher, mentor, Dean, and Vice President of the College-Institute, Dr. Paul Steinberg has served HUC-JIR for decades with dedication, passion and skill. Dr. Steinberg's service to the College-Institute began in 1955. At HUC-JIR/New York, he served as Dean of the Rabbinical School, the School of Education, the School of Sacred Music, and as Dean of the New York School where he served the longest tenure of a Dean in the history of the College-Institute. He also assumed responsibilities for the development of the Jerusalem School and was appointed its first Executive Dean. Dr. Steinberg currently serves as Eleanor Sinsheimer Distinguished Service Professor of Education in Human Relations, Vice President for Communal Development, and Chairman of Faculty of the NY School. He also serves on the Boards of the Jewish Braille Institute, the Albright Institute of Archaeology in Jerusalem, the Hospital for Joint Diseases, and Dorot. He is President of the Gimprich Foundation.

Dr. Steinberg earned his B.S. in Social Science with Honors at the College of the City of New York and the M.S. in Educational Psychology at the School of Education at City College. He was ordained and received the Master of Hebrew Literature Degree from the Jewish Institute of Religion in 1949. He received his Doctorate in Psychological Services from Columbia University and has taught at Hebrew University, New York University, Baruch College, the Department of Defense and the Army Management School.

Rabbi Stephen S. Wise officiated at the marriage of Trudy and Paul Steinberg at the Jewish Institute of Religion. Trudy Steinberg has taught at Hunter College Elementary School, and at schools in Brooklyn and Berkeley, California, and served as a social worker. In 1949, she administered a project for Hadassah Hospital in Israel. Trudy worked as a key facilitator with Youth Aliyah, concerned with the integration of young people into Israeli society. She is a founding member of the National Council for Jewish Women in Berkeley, California. During more than fifty years of marriage, Trudy has been at Paul's side in the creation and implementation of the College-Institute programs in the United States and overseas.

Trudy and Paul Steinberg take special pride in their children, Alana Steinberg Wittenberg, a member of the Screen Directors Guild, and Dr. Alan L. Steinberg, a geriatric psychiatrist, and their seven grandchildren, Lindsay, Michael, Alex, Haley, Joshua, Arielle, and Natalie.

The Steinberg Distinguished Professorship recognizes the accomplishments of Dr. William Cutter, Professor of Education and Modern Hebrew Literature at HUC-JIR/Los Angeles, and Director of the Lee and Irving Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, a national center for public discourse on health, religion, and public policy. A dedicated member of the College-Institute since 1965, Dr. William Cutter has served as both the Assistant Dean and Director of the Rhea Hirsch School of Education, which he helped found in 1970. Rabbi Cutter received his degree from Yale University in 1959, was ordained at HUC-JIR/ Cincinnati in 1965 and earned his Ph. D. in Modern Hebrew Literature at the University of California at Los Angeles in 1971. His current research concentrates on the development of Modern Hebrew literature at the turn of the cen-



Irma L. and Abram S. Croll, z"l

Video presentations of the dedication of the Steinberg Distinguished Professorship by Rabbi David Ellenson, Dr. Paul Steinberg, Dr. William Cutter, Dr. Lewis Barth, and Professor Sara S. Lee can be found on our website at: www.huc.edu/newspubs/streaming/

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OLD STORIES AND OLD POEMS: NEW HEALING?

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I must add here that most details of this presentation are absolutely true, in the narrow enlightened sense of that idea, but that all reports of individual patients are composites. That is part of the ethic in my work. I try to use the art of narrative in that effective way; for studying story and poem has helped me look for the truth in interesting ways, with a minimum of adjectives and adverbs to push my stories along. I hope, then, that you will permit me the following farewell thoughts.

The art of narrative has much to do with illuminating the tragic condition of the human family. Tolstoy's narrator's suggestion in *Anna Karenina* that happy families do not make interesting literature is not a bad frame for understanding the relationship between art and the realities of illness and death. Both art and life's finitude make us painfully aware of the limitations of human experience, and of the limits of language for expression of these very large events in people's lives and emotions.

We have an infinite desire for wholeness, and thus are often disappointed. Our language is necessary to describe that disappointment, and we must even be disappointed at its inadequacy. But we do achieve some satisfactions in the little dramas we create in our lives, and in the rituals of wholeness we celebrate as holiday or life-cycle. We find it in little moments, and we even get it at a favorite restaurant where we go for its hints of perfection. And I like to think that we can be fulfilled in ceremonies like tonight and in friendships so many of you here tonight have given me; and in associations with folks like the Steinbergs.

When we were children, we expected a kind of security and steady reward. So, as we matured, the turbulent reality of the world took a little getting used to. Our sheets, in fact, are often twisted; our status is always as undocumented alien in God's world. Stories, my faith and my academic work tell me,

help us grasp our reality in a context that may even suggest strategies for coping. They also contain analogies for our lives. I have learned much of this from my wife, Georgianne, whose role as a school social worker yields much rich narrative satisfaction, and the fact that children in our world learn life's turbulence a bit earlier than we would have wished. We have managed to remove innocence from the rich as well as the poor.

Literature, then, is the story or the lyric expression of the reality in which our HUC-JIR students function. Its satisfactions are not found in problem solving alone, but rather in narrating the way in which an individual family, a pair of lovers, a single person finds her or their way through the maze of events that interrupt what we think of as the desired steady state. This is the story of Schwartz and Lopez, of the Snopses and of Hans Castorp. It is the libretto sung by Mimi in *La Boheme*. It is Camus's Dr. Rioux, and Agnon's Hirshl Horowitz. It is Franz Rosenzweig and Lou Gehrig.

Do you recognize yourselves in the literature of great health and illness? I suspect so. Surely you have moments of a peaceful steady state, when the story isn't interesting, but life is terrific. You might never have a story without your pain, however, as Yehuda Amichai reminds us in his poem, "From the Blurriness of Happiness and the Precision of Pain." Even the early astronaut who floated in outer space could only say, "Great, wonderful, there are no words." For the poet, the ambiguity of joy meets the precision of pain. "I want to describe," he says, "with a sharp pain's precision, happiness and ambiguous joy. I learned to speak from my pain."

So tonight, while I speak from joy, I remember some pain. Your ritual of wholeness is most appreciated. Thanks go to President Ellenson, Paul and Trudy Steinberg, Norman Cohen, Lewis Barth, my teachers, George Isaac Brown, Arnold Band, Ezra Spicandler, Ellis Rivkin and a host of people who are gone. Thanks go to the donors of this great institution, and personally to Alfred Gottschalk who trusted me before I deserved it.

Why is it that one at 67 and the very peak of his life can't share that peak with the people who gave him life? Well, that is God's

way. But my mother and father would want me to celebrate for sure.

They might not have understood my own little literary perversity, however, in watching Ingmar Bergman's *Wild Strawberries* just two weeks ago. I needed to remind myself about Yakov Borg in that film. On his long drive to Lund to receive the highest academic honor in his land, he meets his past, his secrets, and his private self. He is old and young at the same time; his sins are not hidden by the trumpet flourishes at the provincial Swedish university, they are, rather, folded into it. So I have my own secret stories not to share, and my own private self, covered over with adjectives and adverbs that I permit myself but forbid my students. The greatest thing about tonight, I suppose, is that I get to violate my own rules. It is not only words that are inadequate to capture feelings. Even narratives and poems fall short, or fall long, or fall too richly on the ears of those who seek simplicity. I seek complexity for my students. I know they find it in the patients to whom they bring comfort in this turbulent world. I hope you understand. And they must take that complexity and share it in simple form, as they try to help others heal.

Today I speak from the blur of happiness. But tomorrow, I return to the clarity of the reality of our work together. And so I conclude on a note of linguistic hypocrisy – with adjectives and adverbs and enthusiasm. This is an incredible honor; it has been a very special night. Thank you very much. ■

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tury and the ideological place of the Hebrew language in modern Judaism. Dr. Cutter has published over 150 scholarly articles on Hebrew culture, education, and health and has edited over 30 textbooks and collections of educational material. In addition to directing the Kalsman Institute on Judaism and Health, Dr. Cutter serves on the advisory board to the UCLA Medical Center Department of Spiritual Care and supervises the chaplaincy training of the students at HUC-JIR/LA. ■