



www.njewishnews.com  
 Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ  
 Vol. LXVI No. 28 July 12, 2012 22 Tammuz, 5772

Andrew Silow-Carroll  
 Editor-in-Chief, CEO  
 Rick Kestenbaum  
 COO/General Manager  
 Abby Meth Kanter  
 Managing Editor  
 Patricia R. Rogers  
 Publication Operations Director

**EDITORIAL**  
 Kristin Antrosiglio Pena, *Production Editor*  
 Ron Kaplan, *Features Editor*  
 Lori Silberman Brauner, *Copy Editor*  
 Elaine Durbach, Johanna Ginsberg, Robert Wiener, *Staff Writers*  
 Debra Rubin, *Bureau Chief/Middlesex*  
 Julia Queller, Andrew Wingens, *Eileen Erde Interns*

**ART**  
 Steven G. Finnan, Sr. *Graphic Designer/Systems Manager*  
 Michelle Petrillo, Sr. *Graphic Designer*  
 Dayna Nadel, Jackie O'Shea, *Graphic Designers*

**PRODUCTION**  
 Kristin V. Byrne, *Production Manager*

**BUSINESS**  
 Barrie J. Archer, Nancy Karpf, Lauren Schraeder,  
 Charina West, Sr. *Account Executives*  
 Phyllis B. Lax, *Classified Sales Manager*  
 Dana Galloway, Hortense Jatlow, *Account Executives*  
 Robin Friedman, *Special Projects Editor*  
 Nancy Greenblatt, *Manager Sales Administration & Circulation*  
 Beryll G. Kaplan, *Office Manager/Classified Assistant*  
 Satish Kishnani, *Accounting Manager*  
 Nancy Absalon, *Credit Manager*  
 Lauri S. Geers, *Sales Assistant*  
 Stephen W. Rothfeld, *Mail Clerk*

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
 Philip K. Litwinoff, President; Robert Daley, Michael  
 Friedman, Max Kleinman, Karen Rozenberg, Vice  
 Presidents; Marvin Wertheimer, Treasurer; Natalie Peck,  
 Secretary; Marsha Atkind\*, Leon Baukh, Phyllis  
 Bernstein, Elisa Spungen Bildner, Philip S. Cantor,  
 Ellie Cohen, Sheldon Denburg\*, Judy Elbaum, Thelma  
 Florin, Arnold Gelfman, Rabbi Matthew Gewirtz, Mark  
 Glajchen, Howard W. Golden\*, Jerry Harwood\*, Merle  
 H. Kalishman, Elihu Katzman\*, Richard F. Kessler\*,  
 Lori Klinghoffer, David Kohlberg, Donald Legow, Linda K.  
 Levi\*, Beth Levithan\*, Robert Lieber, Lee Livingston,  
 Jean Mandell, Isabel Margolin, Michael P. Miller\*,  
 Steve Newmark\*, Tom Peck, Ira Rosenbloom, Norman  
 Samuels\*, Robert Steinbaum\*, Jeffrey Susskind, Alan  
 Wallack

\*past presidents

**PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT**  
 New Jersey Jewish News seeks to provide news and feature  
 material of special interest to its readership, and to create a  
 heightened sense of Jewish identity through the dissemina-  
 tion of information about people, events and issues at home  
 and abroad. New Jersey Jewish News also serves as a forum  
 for the exchange of ideas and opinions in the Jewish commu-  
 nity. The Greater MetroWest edition of NJN (USPS 275-  
 540) is published weekly by the Jewish Times, a NJ cor-  
 poration, for Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest  
 NJ, at 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ 07981-1157.  
 ©2012, New Jersey Jewish News. All rights reserved. • Peri-  
 odical postage is paid at Whippany, NJ, and additional  
 offices. • Postmaster: Send address changes to New Jersey  
 Jewish News, 901 Route 10, Whippany, NJ 07981-1157.  
 New Jersey Jewish News was founded as The Jewish News  
 on Jan. 3, 1947. Member, New Jersey Press Assn. and  
 American Jewish Press Assn. Subscriber to Jewish Tele-  
 graphic Agency.

Graphics and typography by New Jersey Jewish News; print-  
 ing by AFL Web Printing, Voorhees, NJ.

**TELEPHONES/E-MAIL:** Editorial — phone: 973-887-3900, fax:  
 973-887-5999, e-mail: editorial@njewishnews.com,  
 Advertising phone: 973-887-8500, fax: 973-887-4152

Manuscripts, letters, documents and photographs sent to  
 New Jersey Jewish News become the physical property of  
 this publication, which is not responsible for the return or  
 loss of such material.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS (INCLUDING  
 POSTAGE): New Jersey: \$52; Out of state: \$56.  
 Call 973-929-3149 or e-mail:  
 ngreenblatt@njewishnews.com.  
 For change of address call 973-929-3076  
 or e-mail coa@njewishnews.com

**ADVERTISING:** New Jersey Jewish News does not endorse the goods or  
 services advertised in its pages and makes no representation as to the  
 kosher of food products and services in such advertising. The publisher  
 shall not be liable for damages if, for any reason whatsoever, he fails to  
 publish an advertisement or for any error in an advertisement. Accept-  
 tance of advertisers and of advertising copy is subject to publisher's  
 approval. NJN is not responsible if ads violate applicable laws and the  
 advertiser will indemnify, hold harmless and defend NJN from all claims  
 made by governmental agencies and consumers for any reason based  
 on ads carried in NJN.

The editorial content of New Jersey Jewish News is independent of  
 the Jewish Federation of Greater MetroWest NJ; the views  
 expressed are not necessarily those of federation.

# Opinion

## Editorial

### Young, conflicted, and pro-Israel

For a number of years it has been an article of faith in Jewish communal circles that young non-Orthodox Jews are drifting away from Israel. Sociologists blamed interfaith marriage and assimilation; traditionalists blamed liberal Judaism; Peter Beinart blamed main-stream pro-Israel groups.

But a study by Steven M. Cohen and Samuel Abrams for the Workmen's Circle is threatening to turn conventional wisdom on its head. It found that levels of emotional attachment to Israel are actually higher among a non-Orthodox cohort 18-34 than they are for those ages 35-44 (they rise again for those 45 and up). What's more, this expressed attachment correlates with travel to Israel: Among those young adults under 35, 34 percent have been to Israel as compared with just 22 percent of those 35-44. This led Cohen to speculate about a "Birthright Bump" — that is, the cumulative impact of the free trips to Israel that have been offered to nearly 300,000 Jews between the ages of 18 to 26 since 2000.

This attachment to Israel among younger people, however, is matched by their ambivalence toward Israel's current policies.

Among those under 35, 40 percent oppose settlement construction, while only 22 percent support it. According to the study, 45 percent say that Israel is not acting as if it wants peace with the Palestinians. (Such responses mirror Israel's own internal conflicts: In the same week that a panel appointed by the Israeli government determined that settlement construction is legal under international law, the country's president, Shimon Peres, declared that settling Jews "in territories densely populated with Arabs" threatens the demographic integrity of the Jewish state.)

The study, if confirmed by others, offers a wealth of implications for planners. It hints that social networks are a powerful force for shaping attitudes. It reiterates the need to follow up with alumni of Birthright trips. And it suggests that courses in advocacy should recognize the ideological diversity of young Jews, and not assume that criticism of Israel indicates detachment.

Most of all, it sounds like great news for the Jewish Agency, private donors, and Jewish federations, justifying their support for Birthright and making the case for its survival and expansion.

## Editor's Column

### Washed out

Over the weekend, the NPR program *The State We're In* aired an interview with a Palestinian man named Louie whose family tried to kill him when they found out he was gay. He fled Nablus for Tel Aviv, where he found refuge in its sizable gay community. Of course, as a Palestinian, he had no legal right to be there, and he lived essentially underground before finding asylum in an unnamed European country.

Is Louie's story "good for Israel"? On the one hand, Israel's relatively open attitude to gays is a point of pride. Although things aren't perfect there, LGBT activists will say that Israel is one of the most gay-friendly places in the world.

On the other hand, Louie is also a casualty of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — unwellcome at home and stateless and powerless as soon as he crosses the Green Line.

Louie appears in the documentary film *The Invisible Men*, which was shown last month at an LGBT film festival in San Francisco. For a dozen or so protesters, there was no doubt that the film was "good for Israel." They claimed the screening — and the participation of the Israeli consulate as cosponsor — was "pinkwashing"; that is, deflecting attention from the Palestinian situation by touting Israel's liberal record on gay rights. The protest was part of a wider campaign by pro-Palestinian activists — most aligned with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions movement — to blow the whistle whenever Israel is depicted as anything less than an oppressor state.

"Pinkwashing" is the subject of a fascinating back-and-forth in the current on-line edition of *Tikkun* magazine. Essentially, it's a debate among leftists over F. Scott Fitzgerald's proposition that "the test of a first-rate

intelligence is the ability to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function."

The debate is led off by Arthur Slepian, whose A Wider Bridge organization promotes dialogue between gays in Israel and abroad. He celebrates Israel's record on gays and charges that those who accuse Israel of "pinkwashing" are engaging in their own "disinformation campaign." At the same time, he remains "acutely aware that other human rights struggles exist, both within Israel and in the Palestinian territories." Slepian passes the Fitzgerald test: "[C]elebrating gay rights in Israel has never stopped anyone, including our speakers, from criticizing the policies of the Israeli government toward Palestinians," he writes.

Those waving the "pinkwashing" flag, meanwhile, continue to regard discussion of the conflict as a zero-sum game: What's good for Israelis is bad for Palestinians. As Seattle peace activist Wendy Elisheva Somerson puts it, "Having gay rights for Jewish Israeli LGBT folks doesn't make life at all easier for queer Palestinians." Katherine Franke of Columbia Law School puts the same idea this way: "As some states expand their laws protecting the rights of LGBT people, pinkwashing has become an effective tool to portray a progressive reputation when their other policies relating to national security, immigration, income inequality, and militarism are anything but progressive."

Or, as Will sings in *Oklahoma!*, "If you can't give me all, give me nuthin'."

Note how Somerson and Franke give no credit to the folks who attend these presentations or read about them. In their minds, a lecture or a film screening is propaganda, and its audiences are passive vessels for indoctrination. They don't consider the audience

member who might appreciate Israel's progressive record on gay rights, and at the same time have questions about the settlements, the checkpoints, and the two-state solution. They can't imagine someone listening to the NPR show about Louie and emerging ambivalent about the Mideast situation. To them, it's one or the other: Israel good, Palestinians bad; Palestinians good, Israel bad.

Nor can they imagine that maybe — just maybe — progress on peace begins with progress in other areas of human and civil rights, and that the momentum for coexistence is more likely to come out of tolerant and multicultural Tel Aviv than the parts of Israel where homosexuality — like trading land for peace — is treated as an abomination.

They can't imagine this sort of complexity because, well, complexity is the enemy. Simplification helps in their goal of demonizing Israel. And that process of simplification begins with erasing Israelis and Palestinians — the actual people who must confront the conflict and face the consequences of its resolution, for good and ill.

Because, let's face it — dismissing Israel's progress on gay rights as so much "propaganda" is also erasing the teenager who finds refuge in a Jerusalem "safe" house, or the office worker who can come out to his colleagues without being fired, or the lesbian who serves beside other soldiers in Israel's tolerant military.

As Slepian puts it, "Israeli LGBT communities, organizations, leaders, and artists existed long before the pinkwashing debate. The Israeli government didn't conjure them into existence as part of a PR campaign, nor did they come into being to serve as a foil for BDS supporters and the anti-occupation movement. They are their own people with their own objectives, leading real lives, often with great struggles, and there is much we can learn from both their triumphs and challenges."



Andrew Silow-Carroll