

The Donor's Story: How We Created the Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection

The Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection was donated to the Price Library by Aileen Josephs, daughter of the late Hyman Walborsky. Along with photographs, personal documents, letters, prayer books, and other items related to the history of the Walborsky family and Josephs' own personal and professional life, she provided written accounts and personal remembrances of her family's history. It is a story that takes place across three continents over a period of three generations. Her grandfather, Israel Wolborsky (the o was later changed to an a) left Lodz, Poland for New York in 1923. His son,



The Wolborsky men (Israel and his father and brothers) at work in Lodz, Poland

Hyman, travelled to Latin America for his work, and Hyman's daughter, Aileen, was born in Mexico. After graduating high school, Aileen travelled to the United States to study and work as a successful immigration lawyer and activist. She is the honorary consul of Guatemala in West Palm Beach.

Aileen's family history illustrates the saliency of global migration in modern Jewish history and, thus, the intricate and dynamic connections between the historical experience of Eastern European, North and Latin-American Jewries. It also lends sensitivity to her work as an immigration lawyer. The legacy of the family history plays an important role in her approach to



Israel Wolborsky at night school in New York

immigration, civil rights, and the amelioration of the conditions of disadvantaged women and children around the globe.

Josephs' passion to commemorate her late father inspired the idea of a special digital collection, which also uniquely includes her narration of the visuals. Together we chose photographs from the album to accompany her short vignettes about each one. Josephs' narration provides information about who or what is in each photo and what the picture meant to her both on a historical and personal level.

Thus, the digital version of the Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection is akin to a digital exhibition: Josephs' voice becomes a guide leading from picture to picture, and "the visitor" learns to see the collected pictures through her eyes.

This narrated online collection (soon to be available on the Price Library's website) contains only a fragment of the [full physical Hyman Walborsky Memorial Collection](#) available for patrons at the library. Nonetheless, it is a unique initiative in which the donor becomes a storyteller and participates in the curatorial process of creating a digital collection. We hope this will inspire other similar collections.

We are grateful to Aileen Josephs for her passion and support for our NEH Challenge Grant collecting initiative, and we truly appreciate her willingness to share her family's history with the Library and, thus, with future researchers and students across the world.

On First Editions and Forgeries

The Jerusalem Talmud (Yerushalmi), compiled in the Land of Israel in the 4th century CE, predates the standard Babylonian Talmud by 200 years. Unfortunately, the written text of the Yerushalmi was handed down incomplete with some tractates missing. The most comprehensive manuscript of the Yerushalmi is from 1289 CE, which was printed by Daniel Bomberg in Venice in 1523.

Some of the missing portions of the Yerushalmi only came to light in the 19th century with the discovery of the Cairo Genizah (an enormous repository of Hebrew manuscripts hidden in an Egyptian synagogogue). And in 1907, an edition of the missing tractate *Kodashim*, purportedly based on further Genizah discoveries, was published in Hungary by a Lithuanian-born rabbi, Shlomo Yehuda Algazi Friedlaender (1860-1924). Friedlaender's meticulous edition of this long-sought-after text was highly praised by leading rabbinic authorities. Friedlaender's work was widely distributed among yeshivot and academic libraries. However, seven years after its celebrated release, tenacious detective work by [a number of rabbinic scholars](#), based on their encyclopedic knowledge of the Talmud, finally proved Friedlaender's tractate *Kodashim* to be [a master forgery](#). Friedlaender had cobbled it together by rearranging and modifying existing texts. Most Library copies were subsequently discarded in disgust, but the [Price Library retains its copy](#), now a very rare book indeed, with pride. Aside from its extremely interesting story, the book has other unusual merits: it provides a wonderful example of the depth of learning involved in rabbinic study, particularly when one considers the linguistic prowess it takes to falsify a rabbinic text and then the knowledge it takes to identify a fake text among the Talmud's approximately one million words. The book also serves as an uncommon and engaging way through which to introduce a student to the complex world of Jewish textual history.

NEH Challenge Grant



The Judaica Library's [NEH Challenge Grant](#) is near the end of its third year. To date we have raised over \$800,000 towards building our Endowment Fund to collect, preserve and provide open access to Jewish heritage materials from Florida, Latin America and the Caribbean. **Please help us maximize the federal funding match by reaching this year's goal.** No gift is considered too small: for every \$3 you donate, we receive \$1 in matching funds from the federal government. Thanks to your help, we can provide the resources and knowledge for vital and groundbreaking scholarship into the global Jewish experience. Please see our [NEH Grant webpage](#) to learn more.

Further Information

To inquire about the Judaica Library and how you can assist with the preservation and study of its materials, please contact Dr. Rebecca Jefferson, Head of the Isser and Rae Price Library of Judaica at rjefferson@ufl.edu or Dr. Katalin Rac, Jewish Heritage Coordinator at katalin.rac@ufl.edu.

To visit the Judaica Suite, please see our website at: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/judaica> for opening hours and visitor information. We look forward to giving you a tour!

Wherever you live in the world, you can explore our Library collections and those of our many partners through more than 180,000 pages of digital content in our Jewish Diaspora Collection (JDoC): <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/judaica>