

## *To Our Readers . . .*

Nearly a quarter of a century ago, Dr. Jacob Rader Marcus procured the funding he needed to establish a fellowship program that would encourage promising scholars to travel to Cincinnati and make use of the American Jewish Archives' (AJA) remarkable collection of historical records. By granting serious researchers a financial stipend, Dr. Marcus hoped to demonstrate how a period of residence at the AJA would benefit those who were engaged in the study of the American Jewish experience. He also believed that once fellowship recipients became familiar with the AJA, they would undoubtedly become the institution's scholarly ambassadors—publicizing its holdings in the footnotes of their publications and speaking about its extraordinary documentary resources to their students, at academic conferences, and in their professional discourse. Marcus's knowledge of and respect for the collection that he initiated and nurtured prompted him to declare: "No history of American Jewry can be written without recourse to [the AJA's] materials."<sup>1</sup>

In retrospect, we see that Dr. Marcus's vision of a fellowship program at the AJA was both farsighted and prophetic. Since the arrival of the first American Jewish Archives fellow in 1978—a promising young scholar named Jonathan D. Sarna—literally hundreds of scholars and researchers have participated in the program. Dr. Marcus continued to raise fellowship monies by encouraging donors to establish a perpetually endowed fellowship fund to be named in honor of a loved one, or as a memorial tribute to the life and career of a special human being. The Marcus Center's Fellowship Program has grown to become one of the institution's most significant activities. We usually award between fifteen and twenty-five fellowships per year, split between eight endowed funds:

- The Marguerite R. Jacobs Memorial Post-Doctoral Award
- The Ethel Marcus Memorial Fellowship
- The Loewenstein-Wiener Fellowship Award
- The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Fellowship
- The Rabbi Frederic A. Doppelt Memorial Fellowship
- The Rabbi Levi A. Olan Memorial Fellowship
- The Rabbi Theodore S. Levy Tribute Fellowship
- The Starkoff Fellowship

We are also pleased to announce the creation of several new fellowships that will further enhance our program:

The Natalie Feld Memorial Fellowship

The Rabbi Harold D. Hahn Memorial Fellowship

The Rabbi Joachim Prinz Memorial Fellowship

Although over two dozen libraries and archives offer fellowships, The Marcus Center seems to be unique in the number of fellowships awarded each year.

It is no exaggeration to state that, since 1978, a significant proportion of those who have earned their doctorates in some aspect of American Jewish history have been recipients of an American Jewish Archives fellowship stipend. Most American Jewish historians would agree that a visit to The Marcus Center is likely to enrich significantly the work of those who are engaged in a historical examination of the American Jew. The present issue of *The American Jewish Archives Journal* validates this assertion.

We are extremely proud of the fact that most of the authors who appear in this edition of our journal have been fellows of The Marcus Center. Several of them have used the AJA's extensive holdings as the basis for their contribution. For example, Felicia Herman, who will receive her Ph.D. from Brandeis University in 2002, has contributed an article on how American Jewry participated in the movement to censor motion pictures during the first decades of that industry's existence. While studying at The Marcus Center, Herman devoted a great deal of time to scrutinizing the AJA's rabbinical collections as well as the papers of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. These documents contributed immeasurably to her analysis of this fascinating topic. Sonja Wentling, who finished her doctoral dissertation at Kent State University, made good use of the Warburg collections during her fellowship. Her research adds new depth to her, and our, understanding of Herbert Hoover's attitude toward Jewish nationalism and American Jewry. The Intercollegiate Menorah Association is, without question, one of the AJA's most significant holdings. Professor Lewis Fried of Kent State University probed these documents extensively during his fellowship, and has produced an extremely interesting essay that sheds much light on the intellectual history of American Jewry during the first half of the twentieth century. The other contributors to this issue—Drs. Kimmy Caplan, Mark Bauman, and Melissa Klapper—all studied at The Marcus

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Center as fellows within the past six years. As this particular volume of our journal demonstrates, the relationship between The Marcus Center's fellowship program, new research, and scholarly publication in the field of American Jewish history is self-evident.

Dr. Marcus relished the fact that the holdings of the AJA were used regularly by researchers who came to Cincinnati from all corners of the globe. He took pride in providing visiting scholars with the encouragement and support they needed to complete their projects. With tongue in cheek (a trademark affect), he frequently quipped: "I used to think you met the nicest people only in your dreams; now I meet them in the documents that come pouring into the Archives."<sup>2</sup> We might well amend Marcus's observation by saying that we, too, meet the nicest people in the AJA. They are the scholars and fellows who come to study with us for a month at a time or more and, ultimately, share the fruits of their labors with an appreciative public.

GPZ  
Cincinnati, Ohio

**NOTES**

1. Randall M. Falk, *Bright Eminence: The Life and Thought of Jacob Rader Marcus* (Malibu, Calif.: Pangloss Press, 1994): 94-95.

2. Jacob Rader Marcus, *All Hail to a Prince of a Schnorrer*, edited by Abraham Peck (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1996): 31.